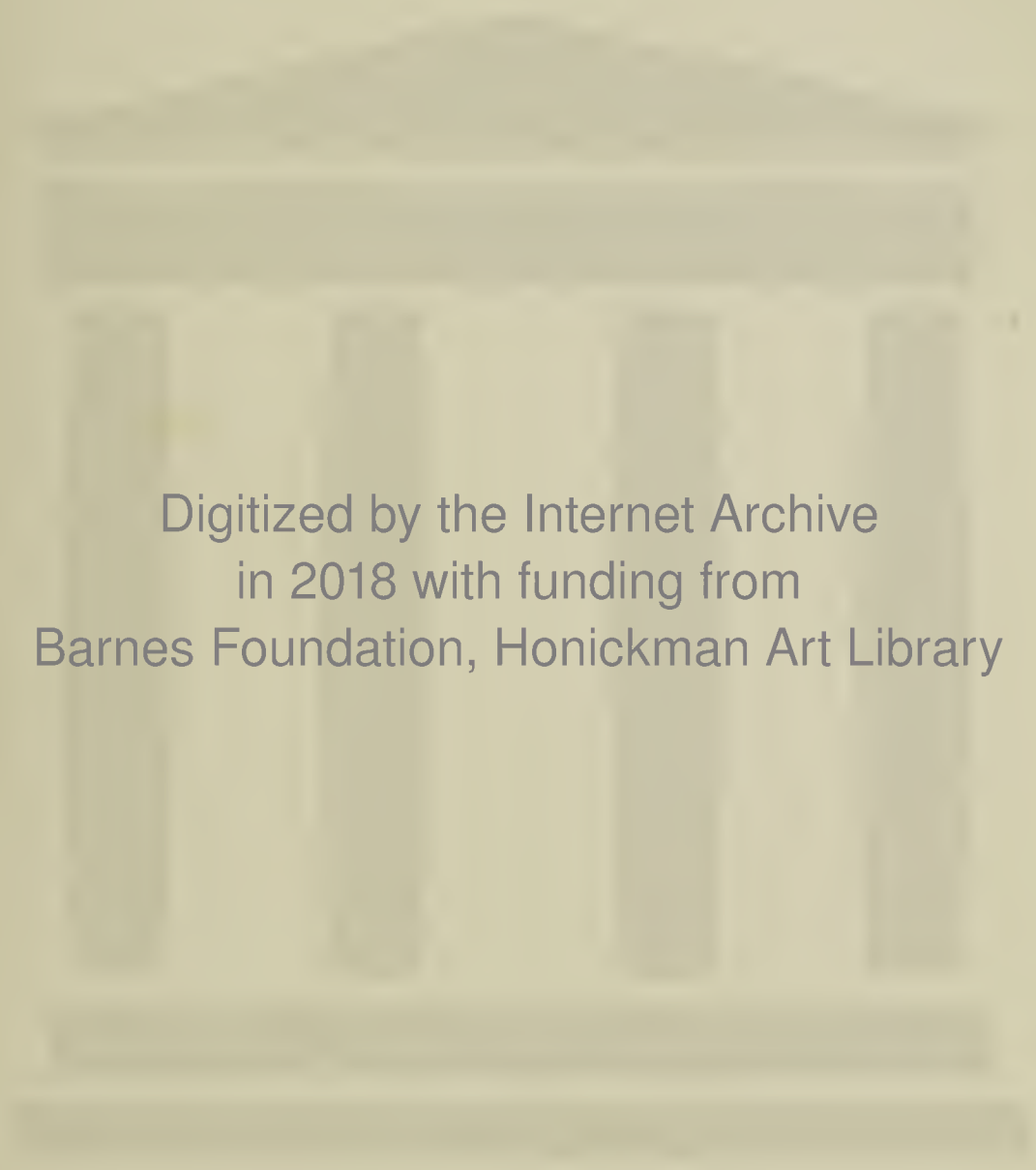


THE
AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

BUERMAYER

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THE AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

BY

LAURENCE BUERMAYER

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PREFACE

THE following pages are intended to show how the various realms of human activity are related to the aesthetic experience. It is written in the hope that it may offer some assistance to those who wish to discover what is beautiful, wherever it may be found, under whatever disguises. The conviction out of which the book springs, that art is woven into the whole texture of life and is unintelligible if taken as an isolated phenomenon, is not new, nor is the further conviction that we must understand human nature if we are to understand any of its manifestations, of which art is one. But I hope that in the account given of the way in which human nature enters art, and of its transformation in the process, some light not altogether familiar is to be found.

My chief obligations are to Dewey and to Santayana, as will be apparent to everyone familiar with their writings. I am also indebted to Bosanquet, to Professor Warner Fite, and to Professor W. E. Hocking, and in lesser degree to Havelock Ellis. To the Barnes Foundation I owe the opportunity to write the book, and to its president and founder, Albert C. Barnes, I owe so much encouragement, and so many valuable suggestions and criticisms, that any credit he may be willing to accept for what I have written, is his.

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THE AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE enjoyment of art is ordinarily looked upon as something detached from the serious business of life, as an episode in an existence otherwise fundamentally non-aesthetic. Art is conceived as shut up in books, concert-halls, and museums; as, perhaps, a legitimate preoccupation on a trip to Europe; but under ordinary circumstances a relaxation, and if more than that, a distraction or even a dissipation. For a few individuals, writers, musicians, or painters, it is more than a by-play or avocation; but for the mass of men concern with it is an interlude, and its production is of course out of the question. In this it resembles religion. To go to a museum and to go to church alike involve a break with our usual habits. Both are expeditions into worlds other than that in which our every-day occupations go on. And both worlds are suspect from the point of view of the habitual dweller in the "real" world. The man who attempts to treat the precepts of religion as applicable to his business or personal relations is as little to be considered fully sane as the man whose life centres about art: both are at least likely to be "queer." A book which is thought of as "a work of art" is presumably to be read from a sense of duty, and in a frame of mind both self-conscious and self-congratulatory—a frame of mind, at any rate, quite different from that of simple straightforwardness with which we approach the merely enjoyable.

The mixture of suspicion and superstitious veneration with which "art" is frequently regarded points to an esoteric character in the object of the regard which, if many critics and writers on aesthetics are to be believed, undoubtedly does exist. Mr. Clive Bell, in his widely-read book, "Art," describes aesthetic experience as a kind of rapture or ecstasy, and assures us that it is foreign to all but a small minority of the human race. The reader of that book can scarcely avoid getting the impression that enjoyment of, for example, a picture, involves, or is at least akin to, going into a trance, and that Mr. Bell is justified in saying that such an experience is rare and is likely to remain so. But the view is by no means unusual. People who profess an ardent interest in art are prone to assume the attitude of the worshipper at the shrine, and to suggest that the ground of their pleasure can be comprehensible to none but the initiate. Art, in other words, constantly tends through its devotees' interpretation to become the object of a cult, and to appear as something that cannot possibly be made a treasure of the humble.

There are facts about the appreciation of art which lend themselves to such a view. It is undeniable that the growth of this particular sort of sensitiveness is a gradual process, requiring effort, patience, and a change in our ordinary habits of looking at things. Nor is there any doubt that there are individual variations in the aptitude for appreciation of each of the types of beauty. If this is admitted, however, it still does not follow that between the world of art and the world of ordinary affairs there is the great gulf fixed that Mr. Bell and those who think like him find there. People differ widely also in their aptitude for operating a typewriter, playing tennis, learning mathematics and coöperating with their fellows, and all these things require effort, patience and modification of previous habits. But there is

not, therefore, anything esoteric about them; anything which would make the experience of those possessing the aptitudes in a high degree totally or permanently incomprehensible to those less adept. Few men can make scientific discoveries of the first magnitude, or estimate their value when made, but science is not for that reason a sealed book to lesser men. The fact of popular indifference to art is hardly to be questioned. One explanation is that something called the artistic temperament is rare; another is that training in aesthetic appreciation is rare.

The analogy between scientific and aesthetic experience may be turned to advantage. Both are potentially pervasive of life in all its departments, and to attain their fullest development both must be singled out from the mass of our experience and deliberately cultivated. The scientific attitude, however, was not something suddenly discovered and assumed once for all. The germ of it was present in humanity from the very start, in the universal disposition to ask the question, *Why?* To make any use of language, to apply names to things, we must in some degree generalize and classify, that is to say, recognize a common quality and a common tendency in the objects about us. To do this is to think. But interest in the “*why*” of things has had a long history. The desire to understand has been overlaid by countless other desires, which have more often than not distracted our interest from it and perverted its outcome. Only after many centuries has the race learned—and the lesson is certainly not yet fully taken to heart—to distinguish between what we believe because the evidence is conclusive, and what we believe because our desires are compulsive. In precisely similar fashion our perception of beauty has been fitful and occasional because we have not known how to look for it, because other qualities have solicited and distracted our attention. The practical corollary is obvious. Just as

the necessary preliminary to any liberation and development of our intellectual interests must be the discrimination of that particular strand in experience from those others with which it is ordinarily interwoven, so we can only begin the cultivation of our aesthetic interest when we have disentangled it from the practical, moral, scientific and religious concerns with which it is likely to be found commingled.

The purpose of this book is to effect such a disentanglement. The aesthetic poverty of most people's lives is due rarely, if ever, to any fundamental deficiency but to a lack of training. Of course there are books on art, there are museums here and there, and for the well-to-do there are the architecture and picture-galleries of Europe. It was not, however, in the great ages of art, by occasional trips to picture-galleries that the mass of people developed the responsiveness, and artists the creative ability, that made those ages great. Unless art is felt to be something growing out of the interests that supply driving force to our daily life, it will remain the object of concealed or avowed indifference on the public's part, and of academic or dilettante professionalism on the artist's. The study of masterpieces, past and present, is an essential part of aesthetic education, but that study is likely to be misdirected at the start and to remain futile in the end unless those masterpieces are seen as the goal of a road which begins in ordinary human life. To show the beginnings of that road, and the stages by which it approaches the summits of aesthetic achievement, is the task to which we must now address ourselves.

CHAPTER II

THE APPROACH TO ART

SECTION I.—INTRODUCTION

BEFORE attempting a precise account of the experience of beauty in its intrinsic or essential character, we shall indicate its general relationship to some of the other human activities. The most obvious contrast is that with our ordinary practical activities, and to this the second section of the present chapter will be devoted. In the third section we shall consider the distinction between aesthetic and what is sometimes called "personal" experience—the life of the instincts and emotions.

As a preliminary to these distinctions or contrasts, we may with advantage consider a characteristic of experience of every type. In all experience, as Professor Dewey points out, there is a double aspect. We are affected by an object, and we react to it. We perceive something, and we do something; we then perceive something again—the outcome of what we did. In all fully human or rational experience there is this constant reference backward and forward. An act refers both to occasion and to consequence, a perception both to action performed in the past and action to be performed in the future. What we notice, among the innumerable things and events to which our senses testify, is primarily what bears upon our conduct, what serves as a guide to what we are to do, and as a vindication or condemnation to what we have done. The telephone rings; we lift the

receiver; we hear words spoken. But in the lobby of a hotel, unless we are expecting a message, we pay no attention to the ringing of a telephone-bell, and often we do not even hear it. Perception and action, in a word, are correlative: neither has meaning in the absence of the other.

This general principle provides us with a method of analysis, and a starting-point for comparison. Since experience is both a doing and undergoing, any type of experience must be considered in both aspects. If it is compared with any other type, the comparison must be with reference both to what is done, and to what is undergone. In distinguishing between enjoyment of beauty and practical activity, we must consider both the occasion, stimulus, or object of each, and the two activities as they are immediately experienced. The artist and the practical man do different things; they are also conscious of different worlds; to compare them, we must compare them in both respects.

The principle which has been stated has even a more specific relevance to the subject of aesthetics. It indicates the one-sidedness of the view, already referred to, that the aesthetic experience is exhausted, or even fully exemplified, in the concert-hall or museum. The listener or spectator is usually thought of, by those who make enjoyment of art under such conditions the exclusive subject of their analysis, as essentially passive. Something is done to him, but he does nothing in return. He is an interested by-stander, not a participant in what is going on. To be sure he looks or listens, but what he sees or hears is only a preliminary to something further to be seen or heard, while in ordinary experience it is a preliminary to action. The thesis to be defended in this book is that the full cycle of perception and action is characteristic of commerce with the beautiful as of other experience. It is not only in the statue, the painting, the poem, or the symphony, or in any of the recognized

or standardized fields of "art" that beauty is made manifest; nor is it only the "artist," as the practitioner of a separate craft or profession, who may hope to create beauty. This contention is of course far from novel. Mr. Havelock Ellis's "The Dance of Life" is only the most recent attempt to make clear that all arts are a part of the art of life; Ruskin and Morris defended a very similar view; and the roll of those who have subscribed to it, in one form or another, is far too long to be called. But the view lends itself to many interpretations, and not all of them are consistent with one another. For this reason, and probably for others also, it has remained foreign to the general opinion about art, and additional exposition and defense of it may accordingly not be superfluous.

If the fine arts are only specific and partial forms of the art of living, we must expect to find in them the motives, the purposes, the feelings, which underlie and animate life as a whole. The beauty which pervades the world, and which all experience in some degree reveals, is in the fine arts purged of what is irrelevant or distracting. Each of the arts, by virtue of its specific medium, seizes upon some one aspect of this beauty, purifies it and enhances it. But the aesthetic motive is not peculiar to the painter or poet or musician; and to understand it in any of these, we must understand it also as it appears in the commonplace life in which we are all sharers.

Even at the start, however, the painter or poet or musician is not to be overlooked. When the operation of diverse factors in a complex process is to be traced, it is of no slight importance that their distinguishing characteristics should be as clearly in mind as possible. For this purpose we shall, even at the expense of exaggeration, begin by making as sharp a division as possible between the fine arts, in which the goal of aesthetic endeavor is most unmistakably indi-

cated, and the life of practical activity and personal feeling. We shall then soften the contrast by showing how extensively the two overlap in actual experience. We must begin, in other words, by considering what the qualities of the work of art are, what the marks by which the aesthetic has been traditionally defined, in order that we may see how far these qualities are, and are not, incorporated into ordinary consciousness and conduct.

The experience of beauty, it has been said, is one valuable for itself, intrinsically. "Beauty is its own excuse for being." It is impersonal: we seek to enjoy beauty by understanding it and appreciating it, not by appropriating it. It is objective: we feel the beauty to be something in the object that is called beautiful, not merely a private and personal liking of our own. Many things please us which fall in with our purposes, which we do not for that reason suppose to be beautiful. Another way of saying the same thing is this: what is beautiful for one is, or should be, beautiful for all. If it is not, someone is deceived or blinded. If I am not impressed by what another calls beautiful, one or the other of us is wrong; but if a certain train is late, and the fact pleases me but displeases my neighbor, the difference in our feelings does not constitute a reflection upon the taste of either of us.

Finally, a work of art is something made or created, and the purpose which underlies its making is expression. The artist puts himself, as we say, into the work of art, he leaves upon it the stamp or impress of his personality. Intrinsic value, impersonality and objectivity (the artist's "detachment"), creativeness, and expressiveness, are the qualities by which the work of art is known.

It is scarcely necessary to say that so brief a summary cannot, and is not intended to, do justice to these characteristics of art. Their meaning must be defined, and the

degree to which they are mutually implicated made clear, in the whole course of our discussion. Even as sketched out here, however, they do serve to illustrate a rough general distinction between what is and what is not art, and for the purpose of a preliminary orientation of art in experience no more is required. We may now proceed to the contrast between aesthetic and practical activities.

SECTION II.—PRACTICE, MECHANISM, AND ART

If we consider man's activities as they reveal themselves to an attentive observer, by far the larger part of them seem to be directed to getting things done. Providing ourselves with the necessities of life is ordinarily the most urgent, or at least the most obvious, of our concerns. Before looking for anything else, we must have food and protection from the elements, and these are to be secured only for a consideration. This consideration ordinarily takes the form of useful labor, whether it be tilling the ground, exchanging commodities, conveying information to others, or any other of the acts by which a livelihood is gained. Such specific acts, together with those common to all men, such as going from place to place, avoiding injury, and so on, constitute what we call practical life, or the practical side of life. Of all of them it is true, so far as they are *merely* practical, that we are interested neither in the activity itself, nor in the objects which call it forth, for their own sake. Of course what we do may have an independent appeal to us, as when we have found an enjoyable occupation or profession, or when the walk to keep an appointment is refreshing and reveals an agreeable landscape; but such satisfactions are not essentially practical satisfactions, and any modifications they may make in our behavior constitute a digression from the strict course of practical effectiveness.

To the guidance of this practical course, a certain set of objects, or traits in objects, and no others, are germane. The locomotive engineer must know what handles to pull to admit steam into the cylinders of his locomotive, and water into its boiler, which signals he must notice and which he may ignore. On the other hand, the economy of steam as compared with electric transportation, the chemical processes of combustion, the beauty of the landscape through which his road runs, are irrelevant to his business. He pays attention to them, if at all, as a man and not as an engineer. In most of our dealings with things, the things tend to shrink to the dimensions set by practical exigencies, and the same is true of persons. We are interested in a physician's or a lawyer's professional competence, or in the honesty and solvency of the man with whom we have financial transactions, and only what is indicative of such characteristics comes to our attention. Of the mere passer-by, of whom we ask only that he let us alone so long as we do not molest him, we are ordinarily oblivious. Practical activities, in short, go on in an impoverished and denuded world.

The shadows and skeletons of that world put on flesh and blood when they enter the world of art. To feel the force of the change, we need only contrast the attention we give to the policeman who directs us to the nearest subway station, and the painter's attention to his model, or the biographer's to his subject. The latter seek to see and render their object in all its concrete detail. The biographer, it is true, may be interested not only in portraiture, but also in his subject as focussing or revealing the forces at work in a certain period of history. To this extent, the biography is a piece of historical research also, and it carries the mind beyond the subject instead of bringing it to rest there, but to precisely the same extent its purpose is not aesthetic. In so far as it is a work of art, it attempts to reveal a man not

as a sign or portent of something else, but as bespeaking attention in his own right. To do this, to be a source of satisfaction irrespective of external relationships, is to be an end and not a means, and such, as we have seen, is the status of all works of art.

Practical activities, to sum up the foregoing, are non-aesthetic in that, or in so far as, their satisfactoriness is extrinsic and the objects with which they deal mere marks or abstractions. In contrast, an object which we call beautiful is of value in itself, and is regarded in its concrete fulness or individuality. In much of practical life, again, our acts leave nothing permanent behind them. They are not constructive or creative.

“Oh often have I washed and dressed
And what’s to show for all my pain?

.

Ten thousand times I’ve done my best
And all’s to do again.”

An analogy with art begins to appear, however, when what we do is in some degree cumulative, when its effects are preserved and may be built upon in the future. The word “art” itself, which may be used to refer to any activity habitually carried on with a high degree of skill, suggests this analogy. If we take the “art” of the base-ball player, the mason, and the dramatist as constituting an ascending series, the element of constructiveness is apparent in all. In the ball-player’s activity, the constructiveness may seem to be so slight as not to merit the name, but it is present in habits of attention and action which are in some degree impervious to the ravages of time, and which become more so if they are passed on from individual to individual, *i. e.*, made into a tradition. In this sense of “art,” all practical activities contain an element of art, since habit, acquired and established aptitude, enters into all that we do. And although

habit blinds us to what lies beyond it, it sharpens our discrimination and heightens our appreciation of what comes within its purview, so that the resemblance to "art" in the aesthetic sense is not wholly verbal.

A much closer analogy with fine art, however, appears when action does not spend itself in its performance, but enters into an actual material thing which remains and embodies the purpose of its creator. With this we come to industrial art, which, as in architecture, may actually merge into fine art. The difference between mere practice and industry, as the term is used here, is that the former directly aims at some result which is felt to be desirable, while industry seeks to bring into being an object which will be a perpetual source of desirable results. We may find our way to a place to which we wish to go, or we may make a conveyance to take us there. In the latter case, the whole act does not need to be done over again when a new occasion arises: boat or automobile can be used many times. The ability to construct something which will habitually or permanently result in a desired outcome marks an important advance in our mastery of the environment, and has even been regarded as the distinctive trait of human beings. The animals use no tools. Under conditions of civilization a very large part of our surroundings consist of nothing but tools, *i. e.*, contrivances by which material forces are so transformed as to make their operation conducive to our welfare. Houses, clothing, means of transportation, are all tools in this sense of the word.

It is not only in permanence and conduciveness to our welfare that the products of industry show progress toward the status of fine art. They are much more fully presented to our attention than are the objects with which we are concerned in practice of the more rudimentary sort. To pick up a piece of metal and use it as a weapon we need

consider only its size, shape and weight, but to make a typewriter of it, we must take into account its properties in most minute detail. The characteristics found in the raw material, and those sought in the finished product, must be clearly and extensively grasped before construction is possible. The distinction already spoken of, between the attention we accord to whoever may give us a piece of casual information, and, let us say, Boswell's attention to Dr. Johnson, is no more striking than that between the savage's and the chemist's attention to a piece of coal. The ordinarily neglected traits of an object emerge into the foreground of consciousness and organize themselves with the same fulness for the industrial engineer as for the painter or writer.

But although in industrial art many of the traits of fine art appear, others are conspicuously lacking. The dominant interests of the engineer are practical, and his activities do not fully justify themselves. If men did not need to be warmed or desire to be transported, if they had no use for dyes, perfumes and drugs, a piece of coal would be no more to them than so much dirt or stone. The engineer does, it is true, express himself in some degree: his activity is not merely servile. Intellectual activity, workmanship, the desire to organize, all have some degree of intrinsic appeal, and so far as the products of industry represent the spontaneous action of curiosity and constructiveness, they are fine art as well as industrial art. They are then not useful only, but also beautiful. But although such things are often expressive as well as efficacious, the amount of personality that can be expressed in them is relatively small. A bridge, a power-house, an aeroplane, a ship, can at best embody a fraction of the interests proper to a human being. For any activity, or any thing, to be expressive of human nature as a whole, it must appeal to a wider range of interests, and enlist profounder impulses in its service than are known to

him who is a "man of affairs" and nothing more. To find the ultimate roots of art in life we must probe into the parts of human nature that are not primarily concerned with the shop or the market-place.

SECTION III.—INSTINCT, EMOTION, AND ART

The value of art, we have seen, is intrinsic. We shall perhaps come nearest the roots of art if we consider the source and origin of intrinsic value in all its forms—if we consider, in other words, the instincts. Art satisfies desire, embodies human emotions: we shall scarcely understand how it does so unless we know something of desires and emotions as they appear beyond the realm of art as well as within it.

At the start of our inquiry we come upon a difficulty which haunts every attempt to discuss human nature in its relation to the fields of human activity. Every statement which can be made necessarily appeals for confirmation to direct scrutiny of the human nature which we carry about with us. But observation is here falsified by assumptions and preconceptions, by theories of human nature derived from language, convention, and popular "science," accepted unconsciously as axiomatic, and read into all that we think we perceive. Before we can lay bare the springs of desire as the most competent investigation has ascertained them to be, we must clear the ground of some of the pseudo-psychology which passes for knowledge of the subject.

Our question is this: what do we desire for its own sake, irrespective of any further benefits to be anticipated? The answer most likely to be returned is "pleasure"—an answer so long taken as indisputable that it has become almost a part of "common sense." It is an answer congenial to a certain kind of cynical worldly wisdom, it appears to provide

an enormous simplification of the problems of personal conduct and psychological interpretation, and it has the advantage of seeming to explain human behavior by something simple, unmistakable, and universally known. We all know, or think we know, what pleasure is; we all recognize its desirability. Furthermore, the view that pleasure is the end at which we aim lends itself readily to amalgamation with another long-established dogma—the dogma that man is the rational animal. Pleasure determines our ends, reason guides our choice of means. Many of the pleasures which we desire are not immediately accessible; security, wealth, fame, can be found only at the cost of seeking, only by making plans and carrying them out, and reason is the architect of these plans. When we take thought for the morrow we do not inquire into what we shall want on the morrow—we know already that we shall want pleasure—but into the measures best calculated to secure it.

This view, obvious and appealing though it may seem, is meaningless. It is meaningless because the word “pleasure,” tells us exactly nothing. Things are not pleasant in themselves, but because they satisfy desire. Desire is prior to pleasure, and when we ask what human beings desire, and are told “pleasure,” the statement amounts to no more than that they want what they want. The things that seem to be pleasant in themselves are merely those that gratify our physical appetites, which are comparatively stable and vary little from man to man. These things cease to be pleasant when appetite is fully gratified, and if forced upon us after the point of satiation is reached they become highly disagreeable; the reason why we think of them as essentially agreeable is that except when appetite is present we rarely think of them at all.

More recently, with the rising tide of biological science, a new view of human nature has come into vogue. We act,

it is said, in accordance with our instincts. At birth we are endowed with propensities to do certain more or less definite things, to fight, to run away, to associate with our fellows, and so on. This, we shall attempt to show, is the true view; but as popularly understood it is the source of nearly as much misunderstanding as the pleasure-theory. Reason is still, in the main, conceived as something essentially opposed to instinct, and life as a more or less constant war between the two forces. Such a conception is not wholly absent even from the professional psychologist's mind, and certainly it holds sway in popular quarters. The reason is not difficult to discover. Since it is frequently necessary, in the interest of our ultimate welfare, to curb our natural proclivities, and since the curb goes under the name of "reason" or "morality," the belief gains ground that deliberation, foresight, prudence—all of which names are synonyms for "reason"—are in their essential nature at odds with spontaneity, self-expression, and the various forms of action which possess a vivid immediate appeal.

This view underlies ordinary unreflective opinion on morals, and gives the colloquial meaning to the term "moralist." It has an unhappy influence upon art also. To it is due the assumption that art, which is supposed to correspond to impulsiveness and waywardness in human beings, to the sphere of the instincts and emotions, must be brought under subjection to morality, the guardian of our sober collective welfare. What is agreeable naturally and without reference to anything but itself is subject to suspicion, unless it is confessedly a relaxation, a diversion, a preparation for the serious business of life. Art, like the follies of youth, needs to be censored and kept from the ground sacred to "duty." This view is ordinarily described as puritanical or philistine; over against it stands another which may be called the bohemian. The bohemian, remembering Disraeli's

words, "Man is only truly great when he acts from the passions, never irresistible but when he appeals to the imagination," finds prudence and calculation uninspiring virtues. He is all for throwing them overboard and making of obedience to impulse, of "spontaneity," an aesthetic and indeed a religious duty. The philistine and the bohemian thus come to merit each others' censures. Morality remains dismal and art frivolous.

The ground is cut from under both superstitions by a correct understanding of the relations between instinct, emotion, and reason. The same understanding reveals the function of art as seriously important but neither hortatory nor "edifying," pleasure-giving but not demoralizing. Both philistine and bohemian, far apart as they seem, agree that reason and instinct or emotion are things opposed to one another, that the more we have of either, the less we have of the other. The truth is that all our acts are motivated by instinct, that there is no one of them into which emotional value does not enter as a determining factor. Reason may show the way to a course of conduct, but it can never furnish the motive power. The distinction between the impulsive act and the far-sighted or intelligent act is not a distinction between instinct and reason, but between the gratification of a single instinctive desire and that of others equally instinctive but not so obviously related to the situation. It is the function of reason to make clear the relation, not to bring into play a force of its own. If we drink today, we may be sorry tomorrow; but the sorrow is not due to any affront to reason, but to the instinctive interests—pride in accomplishment, concern for the good opinion of others—with which shattered nerves or complications with the police interfere. That reason can guide, but can never move us, and that instinct, whatever the vices for which it is responsible, is no less responsible for all our virtues and achievements, is a

truth of psychology, the importance of which can scarcely be overestimated.

Important as the truth is, its application is fraught with possibilities of misunderstanding. If the place of instinct in life has been misconstrued, and its significance underestimated (or at times overestimated), the responsibility lies partly at the door of those who have preached the gospel of instinct. The conception is one derived from biology, and its source has largely determined the use which has been made of it. We observe the animals acting, but we cannot observe their state of mind, look into the perceptions and feelings that prompt them to do as they do. In biology, an instinct is something that can be observed, so to speak, from the outside; and when the conception is brought to the interpretation of human activity, we are likely to suppose that it enables us to understand such activity also from a merely external point of view. This is an error, pure and simple. We do not, in any pregnant sense of the word, "understand" a man's actions when we say that they spring from fear or anger or curiosity. For any really illuminating insight we need to know what it is that frightens or angers him, what anticipated consequences he feels to be appalling or intolerable, and for these things we must go to the man's own mind, to the world, past, present, and to be, of which he is conscious. Instinct, in other words, must be translated into terms of experience, of a changing and developing field of consciousness, before it has any meaning for the sciences, including aesthetics, which deal with human activity.

Such is our thesis. We shall, in the remainder of this chapter, explain the meaning of "instinct" as it is ordinarily defined, and then indicate its equivalent in terms of immediate experience—the experience, that is to say, of the agent who is acting instinctively. Then, and only then, shall we

be in possession of the raw materials for which we are searching, the original or underived values out of which the values of art, as of the rest of life, are fashioned.

We are born with a set of aptitudes for behavior, more or less specific in kind. No one needs to learn to swallow, to blush, to turn pale, to laugh, to show the signs of anger. Acts of this sort are called reflex, and some of them, such as swallowing, are comparatively simple, unmodifiable, and unconscious. Others, such as the manifestations of repulsion, are more complex, variable, and productive of commotion in consciousness. Of all of them it is characteristic that they are common to the species, not peculiar to an individual, that they are means to an end which must be presumed to be, at the start at least, unknown to him who is acting, and that their adaptation to this end cannot have been acquired by practice.

Lists of instincts have been drawn up by psychologists, but none is really satisfactory. The things which we do spontaneously, without foresight of the end or previous instruction in the means (to employ William James's criterion) are very numerous, and the way they may be grouped into classes, or separate instincts, is largely a matter of convenience. However, there is one important distinction in the types of instinct which has often been overlooked. Some instinctive reactions are called forth by a comparatively determinate stimulus, and consist of bodily movements of a well-defined character. Given the antecedent condition of hunger, the desire for food is normally aroused by objects possessing the common quality of edibility, and the movements of putting something in the mouth, chewing it, and swallowing it, are substantially the same under all conditions. In contrast to this, there are instinctive desires which have no set stimulus, and no standardized expression. Curiosity is an example. There is no set of sensible objects the presence

of which constitutes the appropriate occasion of curiosity, nor is there any physical identity in the movements, looking, taking apart, asking questions, listening, etc., by which it attains its end. The same is true of anger, especially as regards the stimulus which calls it forth. We become angry at any interference with our wishes; but there is no common sensible quality in the objects or events which do so interfere.

Such instincts have been called secondary or central; they represent not the ability to perform a specific act under specific conditions, but rather a generalized aptitude—perhaps, as Professor Hocking suggests, a set or organization of the central nervous system. Our interest in rhythm is instinctive, but it is general and not specific: its expression is the tendency to arrange *any* objects, to make any movements whatever, in rhythmic order. So also is the interest in variety, the disposition to become bored when variety is lacking, a central instinct; and the same is true of the interest in unity and simplicity, the sense of bewilderment and confusion in the presence of unpredictable or unintelligible multiplicity. Any theory of human nature which supposes it to have no concern for things other than food, security, sex, and the like, is able to give but a meagre and one-sided account of human activities.

We need not linger long over the consideration of instincts as the biologist studies them, since our purpose is to see the meaning of instinct for experience, and of that the biologist can tell us, directly, nothing. However, there are two circumstances about instinctive behavior as observed, either in animals or in human beings, which throw much light upon its interpretation in ourselves. An instinct is modifiable by experience; and it actually operates, not in isolation but in conjunction with other instincts. At the start, we identify an instinctive act by the fact that it has not been learned by practice, and that the agent performing it can-

not possibly foresee its outcome. The first time a chick pecks at a grain of corn, it has obviously not learned how to do so by repeated trials, and it cannot possibly know that food satisfies hunger and sustains life. But an instinctive prompting continues to act after its consequences have been brought to consciousness, however much these consequences may modify the form of its action. It does not destroy itself in revealing its secret.

Instincts, as we observe them, are invariably fused with other instincts. Regard for the opinion of others fortifies timidity, tempers anger, and prescribes the limits of curiosity. Pity softens ridicule, and fear of the law mingles with the impulse to retaliate. It is impossible to explain by any single instinct any concrete instance of human behavior. For a partial and limited purpose, we may find it useful to consider what a man does as due to cowardice or avarice rather than to conscience, but the modification of these by all the rest of his propensities must always be taken for granted.

It was doubtless because of the transformation of natural ways of behaving through experience of their consequences, and because of their alliances with one another, that the instinctive basis of conduct was so long overlooked. But the view that human conduct has an instinctive basis is not an explanation of such conduct, it is at best a clue to such explanation. When we learn that a man is acting from pugnacity, we are still, as has been said, far from knowing what he wants, from being able either to forecast what he is going to do or to promote or thwart it. For that, we must know what has angered him, what purposes of his have been interfered with, what he can do, or thinks he can do, to override the obstacle. We must, in other words, be able to translate the statement in terms of instinct into a statement in terms of objects and values.

Instincts as observed stand for values as experienced. Impulsiveness and immediacy are two names for the same thing. Something done for no apparent reason (that is to say, something done which serves as a means for an end not recognizable by the agent) is the outward manifestation of a desire for some experience, interest in some object, for its own sake. When, considering our own actions, we find them to be precisely what we should choose if our wills were omnipotent, we may be sure that an instinct is at work. The psychological interpretation of instinct has never been so clearly and vividly stated as by William James, and familiar as is the following passage from his "Principles of Psychology," no amount of quotation can make it seem hackneyed.

"Why do men always lie down, when they can, on soft beds rather than on hard floors? Why do they sit around the stove on a cold day? Why, in a room, do they place themselves, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, with their faces towards its middle rather than to the wall? Why do they prefer saddle of mutton and champagne to hard-tack and ditch-water? Why does the maiden interest the youth so that everything about her seems more important and significant than anything else in the world? Nothing more can be said than that these are human ways, and that every creature *likes* its own ways, and takes to the following them as a matter of course. Science may come and consider these ways, and find that most of them are useful. But it is not for the sake of their utility that they are followed, but because at the moment of following them we feel that it is the only appropriate and natural thing to do. Not one man in a billion, when taking his dinner, ever thinks of utility. He eats because the food tastes good and makes him want more. If you ask him *why* he should want to eat more of what tastes like that, instead of revering you as a philosopher

he will probably laugh at you for a fool. The connection between the savory sensation and the act it awakens is for him absolute and *selbst-verständlich*, an '*a priori* synthesis' of the most perfect kind, needing no proof but its own evidence. It takes, in short, what Berkeley calls a mind debauched by learning to carry the process of making the natural seem strange, so far as to ask for the *why* of any instinctive human act. To the metaphysician alone can such questions occur as: Why do we smile, when pleased, and not scowl? Why are we unable to talk to a crowd as we talk to a single friend? Why does a particular maiden turn our wits so upside-down? The common man can only say, '*Of course* we smile, *of course* our heart palpitates at the sight of the crowd, *of course* we love the maiden, that beautiful soul clad in that perfect form, so palpably and flagrantly made from all eternity to be loved!'

"And so, probably, does each animal feel about the particular things it tends to do in the presence of particular objects. They, too, are *a priori* syntheses. To the lion it is the lioness which is made to be loved; to the bear, the she-bear. To the broody hen the notion would probably seem monstrous that there should be a creature in the world to whom a nest-full of eggs was not the utterly fascinating and precious and never-too-much-to-be-sat-upon object which it is to her."

We can, in a word, know that an act is instinctive if it seems natural, inevitable, and in itself, without reference to any other good to be achieved, self-justifying. It is the sort of thing the absence and not the presence of which seems to need justification. If explanation is desired, it cannot be given. We can all tell why we go to the dentist, but none of us can tell, except in words which repeat the fact, why we resent an insult. It is true that we often try to tell. We have already noted the fact that human beings, having

been told that they are rational, feel that they owe it to themselves to be so, and when asked for a reason for what they do, nearly always discover one. But if the first reason given is successfully challenged, they are rarely at a loss for a second, often wholly incompatible with the first. If they were frank they would of course say simply, "I do this because it pleases me."

The tendency of instincts to be modified by experience has sometimes been regarded as a tendency to pass out of existence. Even James speaks of instinct as transitory and as destined to give way to habit. That particular instincts may die out altogether is true enough, but it is an error to suppose that they have died out when their first manifestations have been replaced by others, when custom and habit have altered their expression and experience has shown them their goal and meaning. Essential instinctive character survives naiveté: it is present as long as an object possesses interest in its own right, over and above any interest it may derive from its connection with other objects. A man who has learned the biological meaning of sex may still marry because of something more than concern for the perpetuation of the race. A blow and a cut are both possible expressions of anger; which we resort to depends upon experience and custom; but we should discard both if affronts ceased to seem to us outrageous and deserving of castigation.

The biological statement that instincts tend to coalesce is identical in meaning with the statement that objects come to assume, not one, but a whole set of values. What is respected is both feared and admired: it is menacing, and at the same time beneficent—as an example, if in no other way. When it is said that instincts clash and hold each other up, what is meant is that the values in a given object seem disparate, and prevent judgment of the object as a whole. A word or an act may appear offensive, and at the

same time pitiable, and the practical issue, whether to take measures of chastisement or of encouragement and assistance, is simply an aspect of the question whether the offensiveness or the pitiableness of the act gives the clue to an essentially just estimate of the individual's character and possibilities. Here again, it is our own instinctive dispositions which lend value of any sort to the act or word. If we cared for nothing, attached no importance to any course of events, we should have no motive, and no material, for judging at all.

Hitherto we have considered instincts as the raw material of art only in the same manner and degree that they are the raw material of all our other interests. A closer affinity with art becomes apparent if we consider a further relationship between an instinctive reaction and the situation which calls it forth. One of the characteristics of the experience of beauty, as was said in the first section of this chapter, is what is called its "impersonality." We are interested in the beautiful not as something to be appropriated and made use of, but as something to be "contemplated." We seek possession of it not physically, but by way of understanding and sympathy. Apparently, in such contemplation we are at the opposite pole from instinct, which seems nothing if not personal and physically possessive. To be afraid is primarily to be afraid for ourselves, to be in love is to desire personal union with the beloved. It is *our* appetite, and not appetite in general, that the food which we hunger for is intended to satisfy.

This conception of instinct suffers from what James calls "the psychologist's fallacy," the tendency to read into an experience what is known about it, but what it does not itself know. The purpose, the bearing of instinct, is undoubtedly related primarily to the welfare of the individual who is

under its sway, but he need no more recognize that bearing than he need recognize the fact that what he is moved to do has any usefulness at all. The paralysis which accompanies intense fear is often of value because a motionless object is more likely to escape an enemy's notice than a moving object, but it is not in consideration of this probable result that we stand rooted to the spot; we do so because nothing else seems at the moment possible. Just as little do we necessarily consider that the menace is to *us*. The idea of one's self, with interests other than and possibly opposed to the interests of the rest of humanity, is submerged in the fact that the fear-inspiring object is unnerving, appalling, overwhelming. The sense of our individuality as a separate factor in the situation, arises only on reflection, as experience brings it forcibly to our attention in the contrast between our peril and another's security. An instinct is immediately conscious of things, and the value of things is felt as belonging to them, not to our possession or control of them. Of course the observer sees the relation to possession and control, and so do we as we become sophisticated, but sophistication is not a matter of simple instinct.

James's statement of the fact is worth quoting. "When I am led by my self-love to keep my seat while ladies stand, or to grab something first and cut out my neighbor, what I really love is the comfortable seat, is the thing itself which I grab. I love them primarily, as the mother loves her babe, or a generous man a heroic deed. Wherever, as here, self-love is the outcome of simple instinctive propensity, . . . something rivets my attention fatally, and fatally provokes the 'selfish response.' My thoughts, like my acts, are concerned only with the outward things. The more utterly 'selfish' I am in this primitive way, the more absolutely absorbed my thought will be in the objects and the impulses of my lusts, and the more devoid of any inward-looking glance. A baby, whose consciousness of himself is not usu-

ally supposed developed, is, in this way, the completest egoist. His corporeal personality, and what ministers to its needs, are the only things he can possibly be said to love.”* The baby, in brief, is at once the most and the least selfish of persons: his world absorbs him utterly, and he cannot calculate ulterior advantages or disadvantages either to himself or to others.

Instinct, or the consciousness accompanying instinct, resembles the appreciation which we call “aesthetic” also in that in attributing value to an object, it grasps, or at least claims to grasp, the nature or quality of the object. The value attributed to a thing is an earnest of traits to be brought to light. If knowledge is as knowledge does, then instinct is knowledge. Of course, simple hunger knows nothing of the waste and repair of tissues, nor does sex have an eye to reproduction. But this is not what our statement means. An instinctive impulse, in aiming at some outward result, aims also to explore an object, to discover traits which a first glance presages but does not reveal. Love is, perhaps, a disposition to embrace; it is no less a disposition to impute excellences, to anticipate virtues. Hatred, again, is as anxious to think disparagingly of its object, to “find fault,” as it is to inflict material damage. The pain of love disappointed is very superficially conceived if we think that it resides only in benefits missed: it comes also, and perhaps chiefly, in disillusionment.

“You did not come
And marching Time drew on and wore me numb.
Yet less for loss of your dear presence there
Than that I thus found lacking in your make
That high compassion that can overbear
Reluctance for pure loving-kindness’ sake,
Grieved I, when, as the hope-hour stroked its sum,
You did not come.”

* Principles of Psychology, vol. i, pp. 320–321. Slightly abridged.

That the course of an instinctive reaction, as it is experienced, is always an effort to probe into an object, to understand or appreciate a situation, may be made clear by further illustrations. Fear, we say, is a signal for flight; it is also a test of the swiftness, the resourcefulness, the pertinacity of the pursuer. When it is over and done with, we have not only secured our safety. We have also learned the qualities of what menaced us, the direction of its aggressiveness, the limits of its power. So also with anger. It begins with an indictment, and if successful proves its case, since the fact of chastisement is evidence, or is taken as evidence, that our opponent was at fault. Victory is validation of our claim.

Of course, this proof or validation is only *prima facie* such, since the result is not, in pre-rational behavior, interpreted by an impartial judge. But the point is that what the impulse aims at, and is felt by the impulsively acting person to aim at, is the confirmation of an estimate. Such confirmation is as much a part of the meaning of the experience as is the material result achieved: the difference between its presence and its absence is the difference between success and failure.

The same fact, in another aspect, may be stated by saying that instinct gives form to experience, renders coherent the chaos of our impressions. It fixes attention, determines expectation, and provides the criteria by which we judge of fulfillment. This, that, and the other episode cease to be detached events, and become an "experience" because all of them are involved in the propitious unfolding of an instinctive course of action. To take a trip in a train is usually no more a single "experience" than to sit reading in a room for an afternoon. It becomes such, it becomes an "adventure", if the train is wrecked; it becomes still more an

adventure if we ourselves play a part in the affair, if we flag a following train and so prevent further disaster. In general, the stream of events which flows by us unnoticed takes on order, and its parts become distinct and clearly interrelated, the moment our feelings are strongly touched and our resulting actions modify the matter under way. Even if what is impressive or momentous is merely observed and not participated in, its parts take shape and stand out from the background of what is observed vaguely or not at all. They do so because our spontaneous interests furnish a criterion of momentousness and a rule of relevance. Snobbishness finds in observance of "good form" the key to a man's character, and among his innumerable actions singles out as the clue to its judgment of him those that are or are not "in good form." A timorous mind sees in every situation dangers to be avoided, a courageous mind, victories to be won. Both, doubtless, are there potentially. But which shall give the dominating quality to the situation, which shall determine its "form," depends upon the spirit of the man who is to act.

Hitherto the word "instinct" has been used to designate the process or function of human nature under discussion. Having made clear the objective reference of instinct, we may now employ the word "emotion" to describe the process, as it is felt by the person engaged in it. Warning must be given, however, that the meaning of the word cannot be restricted, as it is in ordinary speech, to a mood or feeling entirely within ourselves. The contention which we have sought to make clear and establish might be expressed by the statement that emotions are states of knowledge, or at least of potential knowledge, as well as "states of mind." The emotion of fear, *e. g.*, is to be understood as meaning not merely the chills and tremors of fear, but the whole experience of apprehending a fearful object.

We are now in a position to compare experience which is "merely personal" with the consciousness or enjoyment of beauty. In the latter we find, as has already been pointed out, intrinsic value, impersonality and objectivity, creativeness, and expressiveness. Our present problem is to see in what degree and manner these same qualities do or do not appear in the ordinary life of the emotions.

That there is intrinsic value there need not again be pointed out. A course of action, springing from an instinctive aptitude, and finding a set of circumstances which support and promote it, yields a depth and fulness of satisfaction which is the goal and standard of all other satisfactions. When the accord between the activity and the environment is very great, and there are no conflicting impulses within ourselves to war with the master-passion, instinct takes on a mystical and religious character. We are king in our kingdom, and the world and ourselves are one. Pain, frustration, disappointment, and boredom compress the self and make it conscious of its barriers, but when the expansive impulse reigns unchecked these boundaries are forgotten, and all the winds of the world seem to fill our sails.

There is a sense in which instinctive activity is always pleasant. Remembering fear and disgust, we may be tempted to doubt this. But these are disagreeable only when impeded or excessive in degree. A life of absolute security palls upon us very rapidly. Mountain-climbing, hunting big game, and going to war are all delightful because of the danger, the suppressed tremors, they involve. When it is said of anything "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath," a responsive chord is touched in all but the pathologically timid. Without danger there could be no adventurousness. As for disgust, that is unpleasant only when the impulse to crush, destroy, and obliterate the disgusting object is pre-

vented from having its way. The pleasure of despising is one which few of us would be prepared to renounce for good and all.

The presence in both personal emotion and art of a value which is ultimate and needs to derive no support from ulterior values, is again apparent from the fact that neither can be made intelligible unless an aptitude already exists. James relates the story of a man whose impulses were so humane, who was so entirely lacking in hostility to others, that when he read or was told of the most atrocious crimes he could only say that the criminals must have been excessively eccentric. Equally eccentric does the lover of any of the arts appear to one who is completely impervious to its appeal. Music to the tone-deaf, painting and sculpture to those insensitive to plastic quality, poetry to the very literal-minded—all are in the same case. Without a clue they are meaningless, and except in temperamental sensitiveness there is no clue.

Between the emotions of art and those of personal life there is a resemblance also on the score of impersonality and objectivity, but a much more qualified resemblance. In that it grasps objective things, primitive emotion was said to be impersonal; but it is wholly personal in that its point of view is entirely private, and that what it values may with no less justice be obnoxious to another. Art seeks to make what is good for one good for all, to detach itself from what is mere peculiarity and idiosyncrasy. Instinct unleavened by rationality is concerned, not, like art, to show, but to enforce, override, coerce. It looks to compulsion and not to persuasion.

Art expresses emotion by depicting its object. In instinct also, there is envisagement of an object, but there is in addition physical movement. The question of the relation of instinct to art may be most briefly and pregnantly stated

if we ask: how is the efficacious expressiveness of instinct transformed into the imaginative expressiveness of art?

In the following chapter the answer to this question will be sought, and in it the answer to the question of what sort and degree of creativeness instinct is capable. We may sum up the present discussion by saying that the world in which instinct finds its satisfactions is a world of values only half perceived, therefore dogmatically asserted, therefore unstable and precarious. None the less, its values are real, and ultimately they are *the* real values. To pass into the fuller world of art (and, as we shall see, of religion and morality) we need do no more than find the means whereby the partial values of the separate impulses are fused into a single coherent vision of what is good.

CHAPTER III

THE AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

SECTION I.—INTRODUCTION

WE shall seek in the present chapter to show that aesthetic quality is an aspect of all activity, all perception, all thought, which is intelligent or reasonable. The contrary view is that beauty is something which inhabits a realm of its own, that enjoyment of it does not accrue as the result of a sensitive and intelligent ordering of all the fundamental interests of life, but must be specifically sought, must be a separate interest. So conceived, beauty appears as an embellishment of the world, an ornament or decoration added to it—added by the artist and perceptible only to those who have acquired a special sensitiveness to the “picturesque,” to the lyric or dramatic, the comic or tragic, the grotesque or sublime. The contention which we shall urge is that to be conscious of beauty we need only, in the words that Matthew Arnold used of Sophocles, “see life steadily and see it whole.”

Since it is intelligence, and the sensitiveness which intelligence brings with it, that is the key to beauty, we shall first try to clear away the ambiguities and popular misunderstandings that cling to the terms “intelligence” and “reason.” We shall then consider intelligence at work, first upon the raw material provided by instincts in their primitive or unenlightened form, and next upon the activities which in the preceding chapter were designated as merely

practical. It will be our effort to show that, transformed by reason, these instinctive and practical activities come to include what has been supposed to be the distinctive pre-occupation of the artist, the perception or expression of beauty. Take any activity, any impulse however blind, any habit however mechanical, let it become conscious of its meaning or purpose, in the widest sense, and in the process it will become, in one and the same act, a part of the world of beauty. Such will be our thesis. When the nature of aesthetic experience or activity has thus been made apparent, we shall be able to see more clearly the distinctive function or quality of what is called "fine art."

There is one more preliminary which must be gone through with before we come to our subject proper. In the last chapter we discussed the instinctive experiences out of which art grows, and pointed out that each of these experiences serves to open our eyes to a part of what lies about us, and to close them to another part. What is sometimes called the fact of apperception is a part of psychology without which any understanding of our aesthetic experience is impossible. The fact, very briefly expressed, is that we see only what we know how to look for. Unfortunately, it is generally taken for granted that we see all that there is to be seen. Of course it is admitted that we fail to understand much that we see, but it is assumed that this failure is wholly intellectual, and does not interfere with the accuracy and fulness of our actual perception. To speak then, as we have spoken and shall continue to speak, of varying degrees and orders of our perception of the world, is meaningless. How can there be degrees or kinds of perception of the real if we all perceive as much of the real as our senses testify to? Benedetto Croce so clearly exposes the error involved that his words deserve quotation at some length.

“There is an illusion or prejudice that we possess a more complete intuition* of reality than we really do. . . . People think that all of us ordinary men imagine and intuit countries, figures, and scenes like painters, and bodies like sculptors; save that painters and sculptors know how to paint and carve such images, while we bear them unexpressed in our souls. They believe that anyone could have imagined a Madonna like Raphael; but that Raphael was Raphael because of his technical ability in putting that Madonna upon canvas. Nothing can be falser than this view.” He goes on to say that what we ordinarily see is merely snatches of things, blurs of impressions among which stand out only the more vivid colors and the sharper contours. The rest is haze and chaos, and to give it distinctness and form is often a matter of the utmost difficulty. “It has been observed by those who have best studied the psychology of artists that when, after having given a rapid glance at anyone, they attempt to obtain a real intuition of him, in order, for example to paint his portrait, then this ordinary vision, that seemed so precise, so lively, reveals itself as little better than nothing. What remains is found to be at the most some superficial trait, which would not suffice even for a caricature. The person to be painted stands before the artist like a world to discover. . . . The painter is a painter because he sees what others only feel or catch a glimpse of, but do not see. We do not intuitively possess more even of our intimate friend, who is with us every day and at all hours, than at most certain traits of physiognomy which enable us to distinguish him from others.”

Of course there is a sense in which all the traits or qualities are *there*, but they are there as are the sodium and chlorine in salt, as something to be extracted, not as something which

* By intuition he means perception or imaginative grasp.

springs to the eye. To see, to perceive, is an achievement. No two persons are ever aware of quite the same world, since each perceives what he is interested in, and how well he perceives it depends upon his gifts and the use he is able to make of them. It is a blunder and nothing else to suppose that there is less opportunity or less necessity for personal initiative in apprehension than in action.

SECTION II.—THE NATURE OF INTELLIGENCE

“Intelligence” and “reason” are words with a long history, a history which has left its marks on the meaning which the words bear today. We have already noticed two of them. Intelligence has been regarded as the contrivance or calculation of means to an end; it has also been regarded as something which checks or controls instinct. The view that reason is calculation has been, historically, a part of the view that pleasure is the end or purpose of conduct. This we have denied, but the view that reason has to do with means and not ends may very well be true independently of any fact about the nature of ends. It is very clear that we do use our intelligence when we are concerned, as we say, with “ways and means,” and whatever the full truth about reason may be, that use of it must be included in the explanation. Indeed, we have ourselves said that reason can guide but cannot move us, that in its own right, apart from the instinctive forces which it gathers together and for which it speaks, it has no driving force or authority. We may seem, therefore, to have assigned it the subordinate realm of means, and merely to have substituted instinctive appeal for pleasurable quality as the distinguishing trait of what is valuable intrinsically and finally.

That reason is not something with independent authority or even independent existence, apart from the perceptions,

purposes, and values with which our instinctive constitution endows us, is indeed true. Such a statement, however, incurs the risk already referred to, that the "instincts" of which it speaks will be understood as the biologist understands them, as something which an outsider can observe, and which may be interpreted mechanically. We have ourselves so spoken of them in saying that the rôle of reason is to make a choice between instincts, to reject the instinctive way of acting which will thwart other and more considerable instinctive desires in the future. This is a true statement so far as it goes, but it tells us very little about the actual operation of reason. Indeed, reason is operating very ineffectively if it merely enables us to follow one or the other of a pair of conflicting impulses. The real achievements of reason are to be found, not in a choice between impulses, but in a reconciliation of impulses. Instinctive desires, as we have seen, tend to unite or fuse, and reason is at its best when it promotes such union or fusion, leads to the realization of both the ends which seemed incompatible. Not "either—or" but "both—and" is what intelligence aims at. How it accomplishes the union we can only see by starting from the point reached in the preceding chapter, the fact that instinctive activity is, for experience, the recognition or enjoyment of values.

As Professor Fite has made clear, every conscious act is, for the agent, the expression of a reason.* Whatever an observer may think of it, the agent does not suppose his behavior to be caused by a force acting upon him from without. He feels that he is prompted by something within himself; the situation doubtless provides a cue, but the cue persuades and does not compel him to respond. What he does is not because of something but for the sake of some-

* W. Fite: *Individualism*, p. 11.

thing. The stimulus does no more than indicate that the end for the sake of which he may act has come within the realm of possibility: there is food to be had, if he wants it, a mate to be won, if he cares to win her, a peril to be escaped, if he desires to go on living, a wrong to be redressed, if he thinks it worth while to exact satisfaction. The "if" which is present in every instance testifies to his freedom as a rational being. When the switch is thrown, the train has no choice but to take the siding; but the man, in the presence of an exciting object, can either give rein to his excitement or hold it in leash. Which he shall do (for him, once more, it is always "*shall* do") instinct taken by itself can never determine.

When instinct presents us with a pair of apparently incompatible values, the part of reason is always to make such a distinction between what is essential and what is non-essential in each that the necessary compromise discards nothing in either that cannot without material detriment be spared. When fear and hope contend, when the price to be paid for a future good seems excessive, and yet the good seems very precious, it is a sign of stupidity to allow the issue to remain one between paying the price and going without what we crave. Of course we may not be intelligent enough to get all that is essential in what we want and still pay no price at all, but such a consummation is what intelligence strives for, and the success of its striving is measured by the degree to which it does make the synthesis. Suppose that the issue is between drunkenness and sobriety. What is desired is the excitement, the glamor, which the fumes of alcohol conjure up; but these are lacking in real life because the circumstances of our life lack significant possibilities, because they cramp and thwart us. Changed circumstances then will bring the goods which alcohol can only give dangerously and treacherously. The problem for a particular individual,

of course, may always be too difficult for solution, and frustration may be inevitable. But this means only that the individual has not been intelligent enough to find the reasonable way out.

Such a result is possible, to repeat, only if a distinction is made between shadow and substance in desire, between the essence of what we want, and the adventitious circumstances in which it is set, the details for which other details might be substituted without detriment to the vital core of our purpose. This distinction instinct, taken by itself, can never make. It is voracious and dogmatic; it wants all that it wants, without abridgment or modification. There is, to it, no meaning in the distinction between essential and accidental, it is the sulky child to whom concession and frustration are indistinguishable. As we have pointed out, instinct bears the form of rationality, it is felt to be action for the sake of an end. But its reasons may be, and in part always are, bad reasons, and without assistance from intelligence it cannot discover their badness.

All this may be put in a form which makes more apparent its bearing on the stimulus-response situation. Instinct, to revert for a moment to Chapter II, always attributes value to an object, and in doing so assumes in that object a set of qualities, of consequences to be expected in the future. It appreciates and anticipates; but its appreciation and anticipation are always partial, over-hasty, and so unstable. The rôle of intelligence is therefore to suspend judgment, to broaden appreciation, and to render anticipation tentative and subject to confirmation by fact.

In this discussion of reason we may seem to have wandered far afield from the subject of aesthetics. Since, however, our thesis is that the intelligent transformation of instinct is art, that art is that and nothing else, the exact nature and function of intelligence is a matter of not inconsiderable

importance. And if our definition of intelligence has seemed abstract and in need of further illustration, we shall seek to make it more concrete in showing, in the remainder of this chapter, intelligence at work.

We are now in a position to come to grips with our subject proper. We shall consider, first, the way in which in our ordinary life instinct and emotion are leavened, clarified, and liberated by intelligence, and how in the process they come to take on more and more of the quality of art. We shall then show a similar transformation in the practical world of affairs, the less "personal," more public, activities of life.

SECTION III.—THE TRANSFORMATION OF INSTINCT

Isolated instincts, as we have said, possess a one-sided, over-dogmatic, and very precarious grasp of their object. In this section we shall see how, through the action of intelligence upon them, they become conscious of the less obvious values in the things to which they are sensitive, and at the same time less precipitate, more coherent, and more stable. Parallel to this transformation runs a constantly increasing expressiveness in the aesthetic sense of the word.

In the contrast between practice and art we discovered the impoverishment of the world of practice through neglect of everything in it except what bears on the particular end which is sought. Between practice of this sort and instinct there is a resemblance which has not hitherto been brought out. Although instinct as experienced is relatively unconscious of personal ends, the ends are there, and their presence furnished the key to the qualities of instinct which distinguish it from fully intelligent behavior and a fully enlightened view of the world. Like practice, instinct is intensely preoccupied with getting something done. There is, let us

say, a danger to be escaped, and the importance of escaping it is mirrored in the tendency to find the dangerous object dangerous and nothing more. Of course, this tendency may heighten the peril, as when we forget that a formidable enemy may also be just and humane, or may be disposed to respect courage in ourselves; but there is always a tendency, which nothing but foresight of more remote consequences can counteract, to forget everything except the immediate perilousness of the situation. The denudation of the world of instinct is thus analogous to the denudation of the world of practice.

It is true that along with this resemblance between the two worlds go very great differences. The stimulus to practical activity flits across the field of our attention, and may be forgotten the next minute. The object which terrifies or infuriates us fills our mind to the exclusion of everything else, and may leave a scar which remains as long as we live. However, what is scarcely glanced at and what is never forgotten may very well be identical in this respect, that the images we have of each are equally remote from the truth. In this sense, practice and emotion alike tend to mangle and devour their world, to absorb it wholly into themselves, and to count as nothing what is nothing to them.

Along with this common blindness goes a common instability. The hide-bound and the excessively facile in their reactions are equally at the mercy of circumstances. A change in the world will bring the hide-bound to grief, a change within the organism the mercurial. The sorrows of children are readily comforted, and the attachments and admirations of those who form such in a day are notoriously discarded or changed into their opposites a day later. The sentimentalist and the clod "untroubled by a spark" are equally distant from the intelligent and the truly sensitive, in whom life

and art are one. Yet the materials which form the latter are in both the former, and our problem is to see how with proper organization the elements of human nature may be so transformed that sentimentality and apathy become discriminating and unfailing responsiveness to the better and the worse.

Primitive emotion lives in a melodramatic world. Sheep and goats, friends and foes, are divided by an unbridgeable gulf. All bullies are cowardly, all libertines are heartless, and the sublime can never become the ridiculous. Our misfortunes spring from an ineradicable perversity in things; our enemies' misfortunes, from the wrath of a just God. In abstract terms: every impulse surrounds its object with the qualities provocative of other congenial impulses, and strips away everything that might give it pause. Upon every situation it puts the construction necessary to justify its receiving free play and to give assurance of its success. He who opposes us is the enemy of law and order, or perhaps of liberty, equality, and fraternity, but God's in his heaven, and in the long run the good must prevail. We all find it excessively difficult to distinguish between our wishes, and the moral order and world's destiny; even after we have learned to make the distinction in our more composed moments, the first gust of passion is likely to blow it away; and to the "child of nature" it is quite without meaning. Of the latter, at any rate, it is true that he has made God in his own image, a God who is sure to forgive sins, because "that is his business." It may seem a far cry from amorousness refusing to recognize indifference, or vanity making its boasts to the wrong listener, to the religion of the tribal deity, but the animating motive in all is the same—undisciplined emotion insisting on self-expression.

Here as elsewhere the beginning of wisdom comes with experience and reflection. The apparent good may not be

the ultimate good, and the encouragement that the world gives us may really be fabricated by our own imagination. Our friends may not be so virtuous, nor our enemies so vicious, as we supposed. In general: our emotions grow rational as we learn to see in all situations a complexity invisible to the untutored eye, an appeal to a variety of impulses which must be harmonized before action can advantageously take place. To have learned to look for a soul of goodness in things evil, to be resigned to finding a strain of bitterness in all that is sweet, is to have stepped across the line that divides childhood from maturity, barbarism from civilization and art. Something less than unbounded enthusiasm in the beginning means something more than disillusionment in the end.

The change has far-reaching consequences, and requires illustration in some detail.* We may take as an instance the development of pugnacity as its object is enriched by the recognition of traits overlooked in a first burst of rage, and as the emotion itself is qualified by other emotions which these emerging characteristics call forth. Pugnacity, in its simplest form, is aroused by any interference with our wills. Our first impulse is to override the objection by destroying the person or thing responsible for it. The result rarely seems satisfactory, however, except when the interference proceeds from a cause as trivial as the mosquito which keeps us from going to sleep. When it is a human being who has angered us, the anger, if really intense, is unlikely to be satisfied by merely putting its object out of the way. Intense anger cannot, as a rule, be called forth by anyone whom we feel to be totally unimportant: such a person can at most annoy us. To be recognized as worthy of our steel, in other

* In this discussion I am especially indebted to Professor Hocking's "Human Nature and Its Remaking."

words, an enemy must appear in some way as of consequence, either in himself or in the forces he represents; and our enmity towards him is correspondingly tinged by some measure of respect. With this, the simple instinct of destruction changes into the impulse of revenge.

Revenge is inadequately achieved if its object is limited to annihilation. He who provokes it must at least survive long enough to recognize his defeat and humiliation, since to gloat over a corpse is at best a limited satisfaction. Furthermore, in proportion as the defeated enemy is radically despicable, the triumph is incomplete, because such a person will be unable to recognize either the depth of his humiliation or the glory of his conqueror. He must, if he is to offer adequate testimony to our conquest, be a man of some intelligence, and some appreciation of the better and the worse. The more intelligent and the more sensitive he is to the distinctions which we hold to be important, the better the testimony he can give, and with the recognition of this the impulse changes its character again. What was vindictive becomes reformatory: the course of action which was originally directed to the abasement of an enemy now incorporates into itself an effort to elevate him, to make him appreciative of the things to which he was formerly blind. We have learned, in some measure, to hate the sin and love the sinner.

With this, the whole process changes its character. It is no longer one man against another, but one conception of life against another. Brute force has given way to rationality, and the triumph we seek is no longer the destruction or humiliation of a person, but victory over an idea. But victory over an idea is impossible unless the idea is presented in its strongest form. We have not really refuted a view opposed to our own unless we have done full justice to the evidence for it, and succeeded in showing that the facts adduced as evidence for it, rightly conceived, bear out our

contention. In other words, to judge rightly and then to convert an opponent, we must see the limitations imposed on him by his environment and previous experience, for otherwise we shall not be able so to put the case to him as to convict him of error. In doing this we see both the grounds and the inevitability of his error, and thereby the extenuation of it; we become his apologist as well as devil's advocate. So long as he remains obdurate, we do not of course relax our opposition or cease to bring pressure to bear upon him, but our animosity has been supplanted by a kind of sympathy, and a conviction that the real interests of both of us are at bottom the same.

Of course the process may not go so far as this. The opponent may be permanently incapable of appearing in any more favorable light than that in which we first saw him, and his reclamation may be given up as impossible. But in this event also there is a change from primitive impulse. What is altogether contemptible is "beneath contempt," and if the situation still calls for practical measures, they are taken cold-bloodedly and impersonally: we do not hate rats, but get rid of them.

The aesthetic aspect of this transformation may now easily be pointed out. In the course of the development, the object of the emotion, instead of being conceived under a single aspect, has acquired a completeness, an organization, a center of gravity, of its own. Our feelings attach themselves to every point in it, and at the same time are harmonized. Recognition of a point in an adversary's favor does not weaken our opposition or render it vacillating: it guides the opposition to the true point at issue, and enables us to enlist, perhaps, some of the adversary's forces in our own cause. We may, for example, recognize in him a sense of fair play, and appeal to it successfully. An object, in other words,

becomes rich in detail, and arouses harmonious feelings; it is in part also our own creation, since we have by the exercise of our sympathetic imagination introduced order into the mass of incoherent data which another's actions at first sight always present to us.

Our feelings, in the process, have taken on the stability which formerly they lacked. We do not oscillate between liking, indifference, and timid irresolution. Things no longer have the clear-cut emotional quality which is characteristic of them in the world of melodrama, but the precise shade or tone of feeling which has supervened is relatively permanent since it represents the mature response of the total self. So far as is possible, there remains no as yet unconsidered possibility to appear suddenly and overturn the whole valuation.

This development and transformation, it is scarcely necessary to say, is not accomplished in any single course of action. It is the consequence of many trials, of pondering over the outcome of many acts to which we felt strongly impelled, but which, when dwelt upon in retrospect, seem at first vaguely unsatisfactory, then unsatisfactory in more definite ways. We all rehearse in memory what we have experienced, and this rehearsal, this brooding over the scenes in which we have figured and the part we have played, is usually the source of our enlightenment about what we really wanted. If instinct goes its way and leaves some degree of satisfaction along with a lurking dissatisfaction which is not further reflected upon but as quickly as possible put out of mind, the development which has been described can never take place. But if the dissatisfaction is traced to its cause, to an interpretation of the original object of our feeling which lost sight of some essential part of it, then enlightenment does supervene.

As this process goes on, more and more of the energy

involved is shifted from the work of doing what is necessary to accomplish our end, to the work of observing and appreciating the situation. Since the practical motive remains, action is involved, and expression is not limited, as in fine art proper, to envisagement or portrayal. But it has become more and more important to know what we want, and not merely to take steps to the fixed end which simple instinct prescribes. We must see more deeply into the situation, judge more justly of all the persons who offer promises or make threats. To do this we must understand them more sympathetically. Thus in the process of personal desire, and strictly in the interest of that process, we begin to find the sympathetic insight into the real which, as Bergson says, is the essence of art.

With this broadening and liberalizing of our instinctive vision comes also a lesser tumult, though not necessarily a lesser urgency, of emotion. In seeing each good against a background of other goods, each value as realizable in a variety of contexts, we have begun to get away from the intense feverishness of a desire which has a single fixed end and is wholly unrelated to other desires. It is said that among certain savage tribes an individual, if insulted and unable to obtain redress, will pine away and die. Civilized people have ordinarily learned to see that damage to self-esteem may be redressed in a variety of ways, so that no single humiliation is literally intolerable. And if we cannot be humiliated except through some fault of our own, we may even find consolation in the thought that we have been put on our guard against a repetition of the fault in the future. As our hold upon the realities of personal life becomes deeper, serenity thus increases. Emotion loses stridency and approaches calm. In this too it comes nearer art.

SECTION IV.—THE TRANSFORMATION OF PRACTICE*

Much of life as we live it is concerned not directly with instinctive gratification, but indirectly, through organization of the material and social conditions through which instinctive gratification is possible. Such activities constitute the realm of practice. In the previous chapter we discussed the aesthetic limitations of this realm; it must now be shown in what manner and degree these limitations may be surmounted.

Our contention may be briefly summarized at the start. In Chapter II it was said that industry falls short of aesthetic status in that the technician or engineer (and the same is even more true of the ordinary workman) can express in his work only a relatively small part of himself. The transition from mere industry to art, from a less to a more complete self-expression, is made in proportion as, in the activities concerned, the distinction between means and end is abolished. To the extent that the values sought in the practical business of life are incorporated in the several steps taken to attain them, the ideal of art as a continuous element in all human activity is realized. We must inquire, therefore, how such incorporation is possible.

We are in the habit of regarding life as divisible into two major parts—labor and enjoyment, or, in economic terms, earning and spending money. Expenditure represents the realization of our desires, labor the steps that must be taken, in a world not primarily concerned for our welfare, to make expenditure possible. So conceived, the relation between the two is one not of rationality but of necessity. Practical activities are as a rule unavoidable preliminaries to pleas-

* In this section I am under particular indebtedness to Professor Dewey, especially to his "Human Nature and Conduct"; and to Professor Fite (*The Journal of Philosophy*, vol. xvi, No. 6).

urable, but the necessity arises through the niggardliness of nature and not from anything inherent in the activities themselves. By the practice of law, for example, a man may earn money to buy a motor car or take a trip to Europe, but if he had inherited or been given the money, the trip could have been taken equally well. Labor, in other words, is thought to, and doubtless often does, represent a deduction from the sum total of good. Effort expended is written down on the debit side of the ledger, and enjoyment accruing on the credit side. A man about to take a trip may need not only to earn the money for it, but also to regain his health by submitting to an operation for appendicitis: the one preliminary is as intrinsically accidental as the other. If the world were not refractory to our wishes neither would be necessary.

As a contrast to all this, we have activities in which no part is merely instrumental. We cannot begin a book in the middle and read on intelligently or enjoyably in ignorance of the first half, but certainly the reading of the first half is not felt to be merely a means to the reading of the second half, something irksome of which we should like to be relieved if it were possible. If the book is well constructed every part of it is both a means and an end to every other part: not only can the last chapter not be appreciated without the first, but the first chapter cannot be appreciated without the last. Where labor and gratification are disjoined, labor requires continuous motivation from external sources, and the process would stop at once but for some ultimate result, desired but not yet to be had. Progress is measured solely by approximation to the end as conceived. If a trip to Europe costs a thousand dollars, to earn eight hundred no more makes it real than to earn one hundred, although when the larger amount is in hand the pleasure of anticipation may be more intense because what is anticipated is no

longer so remote. The actual realization of what was striven for, however, does not start until all the necessary conditions are fulfilled: only then does the prefigured satisfaction begin to become real. In playing a game of tennis, on the other hand, though the final victory is not assured until the last point is scored, the sense of mastery is present in the winning of each point, and in so far as the purpose is the exercise of the player's powers rather than the defeat of his opponent, the stroke which finally wins the match is no more significant than any other. The enjoyment of the whole is not postponed until the "practical" measures are over and done with; it suffuses every stage, from the first to the last.

These illustrations scarcely fall within the realm of industry or business proper, since they are drawn from what is obviously relaxation or diversion. It is possible, however, to find in practical affairs, in the strict sense, equally apt instances.

Suppose a man to be concerned with building up an organization, *e. g.*, a university to be constructed on a new plan. He may simply provide an endowment, select a president, and leave all the details to be worked out by the latter. His action will then be almost purely practical: he aims at a result to which the necessary means are, so far as he is concerned, as adventitious as is the selling of bonds to a trip around the world. He is a magician who brings something into existence with a wave of his wand, a necromancer and not an artist. When the result is achieved, it is not really his creation. It does not bear in all its parts the stamp of his intent and personality.

Suppose, in contrast, that the founder of the university actually undertakes its detailed organization. Suppose, to make the illustration more concrete, that his particular purpose is to establish an institution that shall serve no vested interests and pander to no popular prejudices, but

shall genuinely promote both the advancement of learning and the incorporation of the knowledge so acquired into a practically effective guide for life. To accomplish this, the machinery for research and instruction must be provided—plant, faculty, curriculum, and a set of rules and regulations. In part, these things must be taken as they are found, and in part they must be shaped to meet the actualities of the situation—the amount of the endowment, the state of public opinion, existing agencies which may coöperate or obstruct. The curriculum most obviously dictated by the general purpose may be in part impracticable because of lack of preparation on the part of the students, hostility on the part of the public, difficulty in the discovery of properly qualified teachers. In the selection of the staff, temperamental and personal characteristics must be considered as well as professional capacity. How shall academic freedom be construed to combine liberty with concerted effort? These and numberless other problems must be solved, and solved in accordance with the dominating purpose of the whole.

Their solution is not *merely* instrumental, however, to the realization of the final purpose, not simply a means to an end. The end itself is continuously modified throughout: what in it is incapable of realization becomes clear, and what is impossible very often appears, when adequately envisaged, as undesirable. That is to say: the ultimate end sought is in a measure realized as each step is taken, instead of being postponed in its enjoyment until the construction of the means is complete. How to fit a particular man into the total plan, how to enlist his best efforts, induce him to forswear the habits detrimental to his success as a member of the organization, and also, perhaps, as an individual, is a part of the total problem which the institution faces in the life of the community, and the solution of this particular

problem is no mere preliminary to the solution of the general problem, but an actual instance of it. Each circumstance in the whole situation requires, not pigeon-holing and dismissal, but individual and sympathetic consideration, and every detail in the whole must be present in the mind of the organizer, must have justice done it as it already exists and realization of its possibilities with reference to all the other details in exactly the same way that the details in a picture are realized and organized in the mind of a painter. The organization is practical and constructive, and at the same time has a vitality and value intrinsic to it. Its creation is not only a useful accomplishment but a work of artistry.

This illustration may fail to carry conviction, because the situation considered is so remote from the experience of most men. Let us take, therefore, the instance of a scholar, a man primarily interested in research, who is obliged to teach in order to earn his living. For many, the work of giving instruction is a great hardship. A man's students may bore him, and the time and energy given to them be nothing but waste and annoyance. When this is so, the separation of means and ends is complete, and labor is drudgery. Whether it can be made anything else depends partly upon the individual and partly upon the situation, but if it can be, the principle involved is as follows.

To give instruction well is to translate into terms concrete and intelligible to the less mature, the facts and laws of the discipline or science taught. But in making this translation the scientist's understanding of his facts and laws is likely to gain in meaning as they are formulated afresh, appear in constantly new contexts, are subjected to new tests and gain new confirmation and correction. No two students ever need to have a subject presented to them in absolutely the same way. If their needs are to be met properly, the teacher must be able to see what is individual in each of them. Only

in so far as he is able to realize in himself their living interests, feel the urgency of their problems and how he can help in the solution, see their limitations and their resources, is he able to see his own ideas in perspective and in application. Only so can he see what is vague or open to objection in those ideas, and draw upon his students' experience for fresh illumination for himself. His teaching obliges him both to clarify his own thoughts and to take a human interest in those whom he teaches, and he is thereby aided in the pursuit of his primary interest, and provided with new and intrinsically valuable contacts with life at many points. If he is unable to make his subject live for those whom he is introducing to it, the fact points to a deficiency in the breadth and profundity of his own knowledge, or in the variety and vigor of his own interests. Success in meeting his problem thus brings with it the coalescence of end and means which converts his labor into art.

This section may be summed up by making a distinction in the meaning of the word "practice." As ordinarily used, the term means action in the interest of some end, fixed in advance and standing beyond the activity of which it is to be the outcome. It is the remote and arbitrarily given end that makes activity onerous and blinds it to nearly all of the world that lies about it. If the end of action is expanded to include all the purposes of life, if the single act is enlightened by awareness of all its connections, the part it plays in our entire vital economy, and if this sense of its bearing and purpose is allowed to shape its form, practice is not servile. To revert to the locomotive engineer of our previous chapter, it is because his function is merely to get his train to its destination safely and on time that his attention is riveted to so narrow a range of objects. His activity is servile, and his vision is compressed, because his end is prescribed from without, and is not modified or reshaped in

the course and by the outcome of his action. If he had a share in the management of the road, and if his responsibilities were not confined to a single detail in its operation, such things as the relative advantageousness of steam and of electric motive power, the architecture of the stations along the line, the financing of new extensions, etc., would come into his ken. Doubtless in every life there is a residue of merely necessary actions which cannot be given any but instrumental significance. But the number of such actions is made vastly smaller by intelligent consideration of all that we do. Such intelligent consideration not only sheds the light of intrinsic interest upon what is accomplished from moment to moment, it also greatly increases the effectiveness of our every act by making it more precisely relevant to *all* the ends to which it is related. Hence this wider activity may also be called "practice," but practice in the broad sense is no longer something opposed to art, but something that constantly merges into art.

SECTION V.—RÉSUMÉ AND OBJECTIONS

The purport of the preceding sections has been that in proportion as practical and personal activities become increasingly sensitive and intelligent, they come increasingly to possess the attributes properly described as aesthetic. If this is true, the expression sometimes used, "the art of life," is to be taken not metaphorically but literally. The grasp of reality which accompanies and guides such activities approximates more and more to the artist's vision, and behavior becomes increasingly expressive, in the aesthetic sense, as it becomes more and more practically adequate. The exact choice of words, tone of voice, coolness or warmth of manner, by which we offer sympathy or encouragement, administer rebuke, and in general indicate our sense of

another's weakness, folly, or iniquity, or of the absurdity, triviality, or gravity of a situation, represent a half-way stage between, let us say, a strut or a swagger, and a song of triumph.

Omitting further discussion of the actions involved in what we have called the art of life, we may consider briefly what is called the beauty of nature. Nature, as the whole of the visible world, is not itself beautiful. If parts of it seem beautiful, other parts seem ugly, and in any case, if beauty is expression, nature, which expresses nothing, cannot in itself have aesthetic value. Nature is, however, a mine of aesthetic value, a mine that can be drawn on by whoever has eyes to see, wit to discover. The discovery is very obviously made by the landscape painter as a preliminary to painting; but in a smaller degree it is made by everyone who can discriminate, select, and organize in his perception the aspects of nature which have charm, mystery, grandeur. Since the perception is selective, it is also expressive: in its choice and arrangement of detail it bears witness to the qualities of the person who observes. If it is incorrect, therefore, to speak of the beauty of nature, it is not incorrect to speak of the perception of beauty in nature, with the understanding, as Bosanquet says, that "Nature means that province of beauty in which every man is his own artist."

But Nature, if it is to be the whole field in which every man is his own artist, must mean more than mountain and valley, the ocean and the heavens. In the human world also (and not merely in human beings as *seen*) we have the materials for the same selective perception of beauty. All about us is comedy, pathos, tragedy; adventure and drama; aspiration and defeat or victory. If it requires the eye of a Dante or a Shakespeare to see into the depths of this life, to read its profoundest significance, the eye of the common man need not be wholly blind to its secret. Even so prosaic an act as

reading a newspaper is not merely an expression of idle curiosity or a search for information that may bear upon our personal welfare. The march of events in the world of public affairs, the fortunes of nations and of social movements, is food for the imagination that seeks to envisage the course of life as a whole. It is not wholly by a figure of speech that we speak of a world-drama or an epic of humanity, and however limited may be the personal participation of any of us in that drama or epic, we can all participate in it imaginatively. In these and other ways innumerable we find beauty dawning above our horizon long before we turn in the direction of fine art itself.

There is an institution in society which is at least partly aesthetic in purpose, and in which the aesthetic interest flourishes with especial vigor. In friendship, in which attachment between individuals is free from the possessive and narrowly personal preoccupations of sex passion, and is unadulterated by the material motives which inevitably enter into business relationships, our attitude is closely akin to aesthetic appreciation. There is the same detachment, the same enjoyment of something for its intrinsic qualities, and apart from all bearing it may have on our individual welfare. Of course we may be interested in those we know for the use that can be got out of them, or because they serve as foils to set off our superiority or as a "gallery" for our self-display; but this is not friendship. The conventions regulating the relationship point the same moral. Courtesy and considerateness, which are expected to prevail among those who are on friendly terms, may be regarded as the means by which the largest possible measure of self-expression is encouraged on the part of each person in the relationship. If we forego giving utterance to all that is in our minds, we do so because we may thereby make it easy for another to "be himself" with us, and we are interested in knowing him as he is. This

is the assumption that underlies the prohibitions imposed by courtesy; and in so far as it is a true assumption, courtesy is pleasant to all persons concerned, and our attitude is aesthetic in the fullest sense of the word. "A friend is one with whom I may be sincere."

Of course courtesy may degenerate into mere politeness, but this, when it is not contemptuous or ironical, is usually irksome: it consists in making the gestures of a good will which we do not feel. Mere politeness does *not* encourage self-revelation, and is thus, both in its purpose and in the frame of mind that accompanies it, far removed from aesthetic.

We have now reached the border that divides the aesthetic experience in general from fine art proper. The transition to the latter will be facilitated if we consider an objection that has doubtless long since been apparent, and that, indeed, sums up the museum-theory of art which was rejected at the very beginning of our discussion.

It is a tradition that goes at least back to Kant, and certainly does not lack defenders today, that aesthetic judgments involve pleasure without desire. In practical life, it is said, enjoyment comes when something striven for is attained; but the beautiful is not desired, it is enjoyed without reference to possession. Mr. Clive Bell tells us that on the lips of the ordinary man "beautiful" means only "desirable"; that to see its real significance we need only consider that its characteristic application is to women; and that it contains no aesthetic element whatever. This view has obvious affinities with the popular persuasion already recognized, that all aesthetic enjoyment is a passive affair. What may be said in its favor must now be taken into account, and reasons given for its rejection.

As clear and succinct a statement of the view in question

as could be desired is given by Mr. Roger Fry in his book, "Vision and Design." "Man has the possibility of a double life; one the actual life, the other an imaginative life. Between these two lives there is this great distinction, that in actual life the processes of natural selection have brought it about that the instinctive reaction, such as, for instance, the flight from danger, shall be the important part of the whole process, and it is towards this that the man bends his whole conscious endeavor. But in the imaginative life no such action is necessary, and, therefore, the whole consciousness may be focussed upon the perceptive and the emotional aspect of the experience." In slightly different words, the imaginative life "resembles actual life in almost every respect, except that what the psychologists call the conative part of our reaction to sensations, that is to say, the appropriate motor reaction, is cut off."

As a result of this emancipation from practical necessities, in the imaginative life objects have the clearness and fulness of presentation which in practical stress and strain there is no time to look for, and emotions, though weaker, "have a compensating clearness of presentation to the consciousness." In explanation of this point he adds, "The more poignant emotions of actual life have, I think, a kind of numbing effect analogous to the paralyzing influence of fear on some animals; but even if this experience is not generally admitted, all will admit that the need for responsive action hurries along and prevents us from ever realizing fully what the emotion is that we feel, from coördinating it perfectly with other states. In short, the motives we actually experience are too close to us to enable us to feel them clearly. In the imaginative life, on the contrary, we can both feel the emotion and watch it."

The imaginative life, it is scarcely necessary to add, is that which inspires and is mirrored in art.

It is obvious that this conception contravenes, apparently at every point, that set forth herein. We shall try to show however, that the divergence in view, though real in part, is also in part illusory, that although Mr. Fry and those whom he represents express truly one aspect of aesthetic experience, they are in error in taking that for the sole aspect, and in denying aesthetic quality to experiences in which it is not dominant. To be more specific: the passivity which is taken to be characteristic of the spectator of a work of art does indeed permit him to be appreciative of qualities which never enter the mind of a person preoccupied with getting something done quickly, or carried away with a overwhelming emotion. Neither getting something done quickly, however, nor being carried away with an overwhelming emotion, represent the personal life at its best. They do represent practice in so far as it is a matter of routine, of detached, uncoördinated special purposes; and emotional life, in so far as that is crude, chaotic, or distorted by abnormal stress and strain. When an unforeseen danger menaces us with instant destruction, and rapid and energetic action is required, it is true that we cannot take a comprehensive view of the situation, or feel all that we should feel under more favorable circumstances. A man launching a life-boat from a vessel wrecked in a storm has little leisure to be impressed by the sublimity of sky and sea, or to go through the ritual of courtesy with his fellow-passengers. But does not this mean that he has not leisure, under these exceptional and excessively trying conditions, either to feel or to act in such a way as to express his character as a whole?

It is agreed that a certain level of practical activity, and of emotional response to actual conditions, is incompatible with experience of which beauty is a part. Starting with that level, we have tried to show, in the preceding sections of this chapter, that the composure of mind, adequacy of

vision, and richness and harmony of feeling that are admitted on all sides to constitute aesthetic enjoyment, are to be had by advancing to a higher level of practice and emotion. The lower level is that at which action and emotion are called forth by a tiny fragment of the real world; the higher level, that at which they are a response to a larger segment of reality, or, to say the same thing in other words, that at which they are infused with a more far-seeing intelligence. The view opposed to this is that the change is effected by a face-about, by an entire abandonment of the real world.

A similar view was formerly universal, and is still that most widely held, about the operation of the intellect. Thought about practical affairs was conceived to be essentially trivial, or at least unworthy to be called "reason." The pure scientist and the philosopher lifts his eyes above the realm of doing altogether, and devotes himself to the discovery of pure truth—truth unrelated to any problem of practice. That truth is to be found by turning one's back upon the actual concerns of life, and that beauty is so to be found, are obviously the same view. In recent years, the conviction has gained ground that truth lives, moves, and has its being in the world of actual living and actual human feeling, and that merely practical investigation gains theoretic, *i. e.*, scientific and philosophic, dignity, in proportion as it expands its views to cover a wider expanse of practical problems. The trouble with what we call, in a derogatory sense, "merely practical," is not that it is too practical, but that it is not practical enough. Exactly the same may be said of the aesthetic aspect of life: the cure for the sort of practical prepossession—"obsession" would be a better word—that shuts the door upon beauty is not to discard the practical motive, but to make the object of its concern more generous and universal—to make it subserve a wider realm of real values.

In spite of all this however, the conviction may remain that there is a difference between aesthetic and practical life that has not yet been touched.

Enjoyment of beauty is characterized by detachment: in it we leave intact what is presented to us, we obey the unspoken warning, "hands off." But the purpose, the *raison d'être*, of practical activity is to convert something into something else, to take part in the drama of life and make our will prevail in it. The world of practice is oriented about ourselves as a centre, but the world of the beautiful is left unmolested and independent. It is no reply to this to say that the artist also modifies and does not merely reproduce what he sees: he does so to wring from recalcitrant materials the beauty which they reveal only in part, and in part conceal and deform. Once the form which he has sought is realized, it is independent and self-subsistent. Art is objective and impersonal, practice and personal feeling are incurably subjective and "ego-centric."

The reply to this is anticipated in the whole of our previous discussion. There is a premonition of the objectivity and impersonality in the earliest expression of instinct, in the naive outward-looking of the most primitive emotion. This impersonality becomes more thorough-going and more and more establishes the essential quality of the experience as instinct has the way to its goal increasingly lighted by reason. In the earlier sections of this chapter, we have made it clear that merely individual intentions, to be adequately fulfilled, must grow increasingly universal. The organization which an individual may desire to build up and make permanent must serve a public need and be part of a public policy: to meet an individual's wishes, it must be more than an individual's plaything. And similarly, the desire to exact satisfaction for a wrong done seems to fall short of its goal so long as it remains a matter between two particular

persons. Both the person who seeks vengeance, and he from whom it is sought, must be standard-bearers in opposing causes before the controversy can find a satisfactory issue. In every case in which a practical and personal desire is aroused, its intelligent and adequate fulfilment involves this universalizing and objectifying process. It is not contended that, short of works of art in the narrow sense, the process is ever complete, but only that in practical life, when leavened by intelligence, it is genuinely and unmistakably present.

In spite of all, however, some doubt may remain whether the transformation we have described is not really moral or religious, and aesthetic only by metaphor. It is part of our contention, of course, that experience cannot be shredded up and parcelled out thus: that what is moral or religious is not therefore non-aesthetic. Nevertheless, the relation between art and morals and religion is so much disputed, and the occasion of so many misconceptions, that the question requires consideration in a chapter of its own. Meanwhile, we shall proceed to the specific discussion of fine art.

CHAPTER IV

FINE ART

SECTION I.—ART AS EXPRESSION

“IF the passions arose in season, if perception fed only on those things which action should be adjusted to, turning them, while action proceeded, into the substance of ideas—then all conduct would be voluntary, all speculation would be practical, all perceptions beautiful, and all operations art.”*

Nothing more than this statement of the conditions under which art and life would fuse and become identical, is required to show how far removed from them are actual conditions. We are disorganized beings in a disorganized world. Neither in ourselves nor in the world is the disorganization complete: if it were there could be no life at all, to say nothing of art; but the area of order that exists is like the illuminated area about a lamp, which shades off into darkness on every side. Our desires do not arise only in season, but appear at inconvenient moments, when the circumstances would be more propitious to the successful issue of very different desires. The things about us may be irrelevant to our interest, repulsive to our sensibilities, and unintelligible to our minds. Our occupations are always in some measure forced upon us by our necessities, and the coöperation from men and things required for the realization of our purposes is never more than partial.

* Santayana, *Reason in Art*, p. 208.

It is true that a world entirely responsive to our desires would be no less destructive to life as we know it than one entirely hostile. Our equipment of capacities and powers requires some indifference, some opposition, some incomprehensibility in things to call forth our energies and save us from boredom. But between responsiveness, and hostility or indifference, there must be some balance, or accomplishment is impossible. When this is lacking, we seek a haven for the part of ourselves which is homeless in the world of actuality. To provide this is at least one of the functions of art—of “fine art” as the expression is ordinarily used. The artist is the creator of a world in which what eludes and baffles us in *the* world is seized and bent to our wills.

If the argument in the preceding chapter is sound, aesthetic quality is present wherever, and to the extent that, the emotional quality of a total process is present, immediately and not merely by inference or anticipation, in the successive moments or aspects of it. All experience, as was said, involves both perceptual and motor elements. It is distinctively characteristic of the fine arts, however, that in them the motor response is absent, and the essential quality is given entirely through the perceptual phase. In the recognition of this fact lies the element of truth in the view discussed in the last chapter, of which Mr. Fry was taken as the exemplar. So far as the view asserts that the mere absence of practical responsibility is the sufficient or necessary condition of aesthetic responsiveness, we have seen reasons for rejecting it; but there is no doubt that it calls attention to a contrast between experiences purely aesthetic and those modified by the presence of other motives. In aesthetic experience, we do get an equivalent of a sort for practical life without going through the practice; the artist, though his aim is active, aims to express something and not effect something. The question which must be answered is, How can something

observed give us the emotional equivalent, even if a modified and transformed equivalent, of something done?

The work of art, it was said, is underivedly or immediately satisfactory. What gives and does not merely promise or suggest satisfaction, brings striving to an end, quiets the will. This is the aspect of truth in the statement already referred to, that art gives pleasure without desire. How, then, is the work of art related to the object that stimulates emotion and thereby destroys equilibrium and initiates striving? Propagandist art, pornographic art, and "inspirational" art are undoubtedly intended to start practical activities, but it is generally considered that in so far as art is any of these it is not art at all. The difficulty is, once more, that what arouses emotion destroys equilibrium, and when calm is restored the emotion is finished and done with. How can one and the same object both arouse and appease something which is essentially a transitive process? In the answer to this question lies the key to the difference between the emotions of real life and those of art.

The answer is forecasted in our recognition in Chapter II of the essentially cognitive and form-giving function of emotion at all levels. Emotion may be regarded not as a feeling merely, but as a process of investigation. When an object has impelled us to do something, and when we have experienced the results of our action, these results are attributed back to the original stimulus, which takes on in consequence a modification of its immediate quality. Primitive emotion, as was said earlier in the discussion, tends to invest its object with a complex of qualities by which its impulsive force is heightened. We need not dwell further on the manner by which these imputed characteristics are discarded or confirmed and amplified. Though the expression is ambiguous, we may say that in the process the meaning of emotion is extracted; the judgment of value which the emotion of love,

for example, passes upon its object is made explicit, and the qualities which the action consequent upon the emotion (instinct) brings to light are read into the object. This is what is meant when we speak of an emotion as objectified; that it has brought to light and fixed for emphasis a certain set of characteristics that are significant for it, and that these are taken as a principle of organization for the object as a whole. Originally the exciting stimulus appeared with a fringe or halo of diffused sentiment, both the emotion and its object being vague and without internal order. This is the stage at which emotion is speechless and benumbing rather than clarifying and illuminating. When the instinctive cycle has run its course, the object no longer appears in the same light: the process, whether it has brought disillusionment, confirmation, or heightened expectations for the future, has altered the colors and shifted the lights and shadows of the original picture. If the subject is drawn with these modifications, with these acquired emphases and implications, the picture contains not only the stimulus to the emotion but the issue of it also and hence provides a résumé or equivalent of the experience as a whole.

The transition from crude impulse, through intelligent and imaginative practical or personal life, to art in its fully detached and impersonal form may be illustrated by a series of examples. We may take as representative of the first stage the initial appearance of attachment or liking for a particular individual; of the second, the same attachment as it appears after it has taken more definite form under the influence of extended experience; and of the third, the novelist's or dramatist's ability to understand and depict a definite form of what is lovable or admirable, despicable or absurd in human nature.

At the start, there is obviously no clear perception of whatever there may be that, in this particular case, strikes us as

appealing. We should be unable to say with any definiteness what in the way of appearance, manner, tone of voice, or expression, impresses us: any description we might be ready with would be abstract and applicable to other individuals. The object of our liking is not, in a word, individualized, and until it is the attachment is potential and not actual. Our feelings, whether luke-warm or intense, are rather associated with their object than relevant to it in its detail, and represent not insight but the prelude to insight, a signal that we have found something that seems worth looking into. However strong the liking so aroused may be, at its inception it cannot really lay hold of an object, but only point in the direction of one. It may hope, or even feel assured, but it cannot know, that what it has found is something real and not a figment of its own imagination.

With time and opportunity for observation under favorable conditions, this hope may be confirmed. The first tentative picture is elaborated in its parts, corrected and enriched with the results of experience. But for the interest, we should perhaps never have been concerned to make the observations, to inform ourselves of the illuminating facts; and these in turn make the interest intelligent and specific. Its object is no longer a bright haze, but a substantial form, of which each part is characteristically related to all the rest. The quick smile that seemed, *e. g.*, the expression of an ironical turn of mind may mean only spiteful pleasure in the shortcomings of others, or the calm which seemed bovine may be the composure that comes with reflectiveness and detachment. We learn, in short, to read in a countenance the qualities of a character, and in what is done the manifestations of what the eye saw at first obscurely or not at all. The tones of a voice cease to be merely monotonous or melodious, and acquire an eloquence previously inaudible; they may tell us more than the words which are spoken. All

these things become points of fixation for the total feeling which the person arouses, but the dominating quality in that feeling gives the rest their arrangement and importance: the defects of a friend and those of an enemy are seen in a very different perspective.

This imaginative understanding, or intuition, as Croce would call it, is now coming to be the chief part of emotional expression. We recognize our friends, that is to say, not only by the fact that we can look to them for coöperation in what we want to do, but also, and sometimes chiefly, by the fact that we can without boring them talk to them about things which it would be an impertinence to obtrude upon the attention of a stranger or mere acquaintance. People in whom we are interested are people of whom we wish to have an intelligible, and where the interest is very strong, an exhaustive idea, and the formation of this idea is said, and truly said, to be an "expression" of our interest. That what is desired from those to whom we are attached is not flattery or eulogy, but an appreciation which does us justice and no more than justice, is apparent from the fact that undeserved praise is as annoying, and often more mortifying, than unmerited detraction. There is a passage in Nietzsche in which he speaks of two stages of fineness of feeling in personal relationships. At the first, he says, we try to give others a more favorable impression of ourselves than we know to be the truth, because of our natural wish for their good opinion. At the second, this is the very thing we most fear doing, since its consequence is that the regard we get from them does not really belong to us, their good opinion passes us by, and there is no genuine comprehension. In short: a vision which is essentially that of the artist is what in personal attachment is desired and, if the attachment is real, offered; and the same holds true of all the emotions in their intelligent form. There is no emotion that does not as it becomes intense and con-

scious of its purpose seek to envisage its object in characteristic form, and such envisagement is art.

When the aesthetic interest is pure, *i. e.*, freed from admixture of practical concern, it is liberated not only in that it exacts from us no duties, but also in that our imagination is entirely untrammelled in the work of creation. In the things, persons, and situations with which we have actually to deal there is always some admixture of brute fact, something which is so and not otherwise for no intelligible reason. The interest in finding an object in which our feelings can be satisfied is always subject to the prior interest in accurate representation, which may not, but which may, conflict with the imaginative interest. We see the necessity which prevents real persons from playing the rôle which would fully satisfy our imagination, and hence, if we are wise, we do not resent their short-comings; but the short-comings are none the less actual for being inevitable and blameless.

“Short-comings” is not, needless to say, intended to mean failure to be perfectly virtuous, or to display all desirable qualities in the highest degree. It is rather to be understood as referring to what has practical importance but no significance for feeling. Someone may be taken with small-pox and need to be nursed back to health, and the process of taking care of him contains much that is not germane to imaginative realization. If the objection is raised that we do not truly know a human being until we have seen him in the extremity of weakness and suffering, with the marks of his mortality visibly upon him, that is true enough; but we may not have time and energy to see and feel the force of these things because the practical steps to be taken in getting him well—steps which have no specific relevance to him as an individual—absorb all our attention. In general: what is practically important may be aesthetically without significance, and the two horses cannot always be driven abreast.

In the fine arts proper, there is no limit, except the artist's ability, to the interest, the emotional significance or expressiveness, of which the subject-matter is capable. In creating this expressiveness, the artist does not, as we have already seen, reverse the course which has brought him from bare impulse, with its accompaniment of crude or raw feeling, to the threshold of art. Fear, disgust, hatred, love—all these are in the beginning no more than signs of some quality, as yet not fully grasped, in the things which aroused them. To have gone through the acts which they incite us to is to have explored the things, to have discovered an ordering of all their traits about a centre or principle of organization which the emotions set, or more accurately, reveal. It is to have discovered what danger, hatefulness, loveliness, mean—what they threaten, what they promise, what the limits of their power are. Each of them organizes objects in its own way, and the artist, in seeing that organization and revealing the way in which what is so ordered is transfigured, provides something in which the full meaning of the emotion is realized, and in which it can rest. Mrs. Wharton, at the end of "The House of Mirth," when she wishes to indicate that the bars at last are down between a woman who is dead and a man from whom she remained estranged while alive, says only, "There passed between them the word that made all clear." To speak this word, which life leaves so often unuttered, is the business of the artist.

To speak more literally: in a work of art everything is relevant to the feeling which is to be expressed, and there is no residue of brute fact, destitute of meaning. The novelist, *e. g.*, is at liberty to place the persons of his book in any circumstances which will elicit from them fully characteristic action, to show what consequences such action naturally incurs, and to guard against such accidents as in point of fact are well within the range of possibility, but which when

they occur destroy the emotional force or potency of a situation. In real life, Tristan might, in the course of his voyage with Isolde from Ireland to Cornwall, have fallen overboard and been drowned; there is nothing impossible about such a thing, and a writer would have the essential warrant of fact in introducing it into his narrative; the rôle of accident in life may itself be a theme for artistic treatment, as it is with Hardy; but the story of Tristan and Isolde would of course be destroyed by anything of the sort. In "Hamlet," again, the King might have died of apoplexy after the scene in which the travelling players perform; such an event would not only have been possible, it would have been a solution of the practical problem not wholly unsatisfactory from Hamlet's point of view since he might have felt himself to be the indirect cause of the King's death. It would have ruined the play, however, as a study in tragic irresolution. Life, in a word, is constantly evading the solution of its own problems, an evasion which the artist exists to remedy. It is art that tells the stories that are "too good to be true," which means: too true to be real.

This does not mean, once more, that what the artist has to say is different in kind from what is to be said in actual life, or that the realm of art is in any essential respect divorced from the realm of reality. The associations which the word "imagination" has acquired in common speech are likely to lead us to think of it as having to do with the remote and the fantastic. But as Ruskin long ago pointed out, there is a difference between the "imagination" and what is better called "fancy." It is fancy that takes us "somewhere east of Suez" or "far away and long ago" to find its world, that supposes that the real world is a stage too meanly set for any drama of real impressiveness. It is not without significance that Goethe, Aeschylus, and Shakespeare wove their greatest plays about plots that were borrowed and not

invented, that Lucretius and Dante were avowedly seeking to depict what they thought more real and not less real than things visible to the naked eye. "Eye hath not seen—" but that is because its gaze is bespoken elsewhere, not because what is to be seen lies below the horizon. The imagination, in other words, is at its best when it reveals

". . . Christ walking on the water
Not of Gennesareth, but Thames."

We may sum up the discussion of the expressiveness of art by saying that the artist anticipates or summarizes for us the processes of experience by which an object, from being merely a signal or cue to an emotion, becomes an embodiment or realization of it. He completes and purifies something which in our actual lives is constantly going on, but which, through our insensitiveness or irresoluteness, or the perversity of circumstances, is ended or disfigured before it can reach its consummation. Art is to the life of feeling what the laboratory is to science, a place from which distracting factors may be excluded, and things so controlled as to reveal their maximum significance. And as laboratory experimentation is most enlightening and fruitful when it is most able to reproduce the conditions under which actual phenomena occur, so art is at its best when the imagination succeeds in illuminating and transfiguring most of "what men live by."

Considering art as the laboratory of feeling, in which the essential meaning of desire is extracted and expressed, we see that the absence of practical activity, of physical possession, is not wholly a draw-back. Practical activity, as we have already seen, always has in addition to its efficacious aspect, its function of bringing something into existence, a corroborative aspect. It confirms an hypothesis, an esti-

mate put upon things. Love seeks to know the beloved, hate to probe the depths of iniquity in the hated, and so on. But art seeks to give just this knowledge: it reveals the meaning of love, of hatred, of desire gratified or hope disappointed. It so arranges its imaginary world that depicted events cease to be merely particular events, material facts, and become indications of essential nature. In so far as the artist succeeds, he liberates instinct from its accretions of superfluity or accident, which in real living must be gradually purged away by trial and error, and gives at one stroke the substance of desire. Like the scientist in his experiments, he provides us with crucial instances.

We may take as an example the story of Paolo and Francesca, as Dante gives it. The story is that of a pair of lovers who, desiring each other's companionship on the most intimate terms possible, at the cost of all the other goods in the world, are held to their bargain. Their fate is to spend eternity with no companionship, no interest, no life, in a word, but what they can provide for each other, and in this lies their punishment, the tragedy of their situation. The point of the story is to give, along with the glamor, the poignancy, the intensity of the original impulse, the sense of its essential meaning and inevitable end: to make each of the two real and each inherent in the nature of the other.

To see in an object its potential outcome, the promise or the threat which it contains, to recognize the qualities, at once universal and individual, by virtue of which it makes that promise or that threat, is to see it universally, and to be freed from the irresistible imperativeness which it exercises when it gives the cue to but one impulse, and is set in no context of eventual issues. The telescoping of desire and fulfillment, or frustration, in a single object, through the perception of their universal quality and relations brings, not the comparative apathy which succeeds any ordinary instinc-

tive gratification but the peace which comes with complete understanding of what was desired. When the issue, though felt as frustration, is also understood and felt to be necessary and inevitable, the bitterness of defeat is converted into the peace of resignation, in which we possess at least this much of the lost good: a sufficient understanding of its nature to enable us to see what made its realization impossible. This peace of mind, this domination of desire which comes when desire is imaginatively grasped and dominated, is the consolation which art offers for our relatively infirm hold on the real world.

SECTION II.—ART AND ITS MEDIUM

The story of fine art is only half told when we have said that it is expression, and expression more complete than the conditions or ordinary living allow. To finish the story we must add that it is expression in a medium of sense. In the imaginative picture of an individual in which, let us say, our antipathy to him is expressed, there enter images of various sorts. We think partly, no doubt, of his appearance, with the disagreeable aspects emphasized, but we hear also the echoes of his voice, remember his mannerisms of manner and speech, think of the results of his acts upon ourselves and others, guess at his thoughts, and so on. The artist's expression is very different. If he is a writer he must select only such aspects of his subject as words can do justice to, and these are quite other than those which the painter, for example, is interested in. Marlowe, when seeking to give a sense of the beauty of Helen of Troy, can only do so by calling to mind its effects:

“Is this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?”

The painter cannot summon up the associations of the Trojan war, but he can put the visible beauty of Helen before us.

The musician, again, can neither show us what is happening, nor tell us of its effects. What he can do is, by virtue of some connection between sound and feeling, of which the psychological explanation is utterly obscure, to render human desires, or the emotional quality of a situation as felt, with a directness that none of the other arts can approach. In "Tod und das Mädchen," we know nothing of the history or appearance of the girl who sees the approach of death, of the hopes which death will disappoint or the griefs which it will cause. What we know and feel is the terror and anguish of mortality, and the relief that comes with the thought that in the grave is peace.

For a more detailed illustration of what the media of the different arts permit and what they forbid, we may compare the picture of Mona Lisa by Leonardo with Pater's famous disquisition upon it. Pater has been criticized, and no doubt justly, for reading into the picture what Leonardo in all probability never thought of, and what cannot possibly be put in a painting. But whatever Pater's intention, it is possible to consider his words, not as an account of the painting, *i. e.*, not as art-criticism, but as an independent work of art on the same theme. Leonardo's painting is of value because of the skill with which space is organized and solidity rendered, because of its vigor of line, the poise and balance of masses, the relation of the central figure to the background, etc. In so far as the painting possesses in addition to these general plastic qualities, the representation of characteristic appearance in its object, its value is heightened; but its qualities remain fundamentally plastic, and only such illustrative elements as can be translated into the plastic medium are germane to it.

Pater, in contrast—and it is as little necessary that his description, considered as a work of art, should follow its original as that Leonardo should have painted with photographic literalness—proceeds chiefly by suggestion. Mona Lisa represents “what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire.” She is given an imaginary history, many and mysterious adventures, the knowledge of strange secrets. All thought and all experience have passed into her mind, and written themselves upon her face. And in the languor of the trailing sentences, the rhythm of a prose that is never emphatic and yet is full of cadences, there is a sensuous equivalent—this time in terms of sound—for the profound disillusionment, combined with ever-watchful interest in the spectacle of life, which is attributed to the subject. The resources of language are utilized to the utmost, its sound, its rhythms, the remoter suggestiveness of the images and meanings which it embodies, are made the fullest use of, and no effects are attempted which words are incompetent to achieve. We have in the description a perfect sense of what a medium can be made to do.

To work in a specific medium, *i. e.*, to conceive things under only one of their many real aspects, is both to gain and to lose. The artist, in the narrow and specific sense of the word, has his vision for what comes into his purview vastly sharpened, and at the same time his distraction by irrelevant issues diminished. On the other hand, he loses in breadth, and he is always liable to the danger of technical and specialistic preoccupations, and the blight of a paralyzing aestheticism. His success is also conditioned by something not wholly germane to aesthetic expressiveness, that is to say, by a native gift for the use of his medium. Hence it is that we find extraordinarily skilful painters or writers who are not great artists because they have nothing to say. If technical ability and aesthetic vision were identical, the

poorest painter would be a better judge of visual beauty than any man who cannot paint at all, which is assuredly not the fact. Once more, therefore, we see how false is the view that aesthetic experience and "fine art" are one and the same thing.

Medium determines not only the materials of an art, but also its form or forms.

Colors, masses, musical tones and words have no aesthetic quality, or almost none, until they are given characteristic arrangement or *form*. The distinction between form and matter is in general parallel to that between terms and relations, although it is rarely possible to make the parallel exact. Form and matter, of course, are conceptions applicable to many fields other than that of art. In general, it is form that gives character or individuality to anything; it includes shape, relative size, degree of intensity, rhythm, and other types of relationship *ad infinitum*. We may say in general that where there is no form there is no characteristic quality, and that those of our sensations which refuse to take on any but very simple relationships—such sensations, *e. g.*, as temperature, taste, and smell—seem to correspond to nothing which is very real or very important in the world.

Matter without form is chaotic, incomprehensible, and, as related to our interests, is little better than nothing. Form without matter is in no better case. Forms are more congenial to the intelligence than matter, and lend themselves more readily to discourse, but the discourse is empty unless the form, we may say, *informs* something, introduces order into some material. The dumbness of mere sensation is no worse than the hollowness of the mere form or formula. Between saying nothing, and being unable to point to an illustration of what we say, there is no real difference. There is a relative independence of form and matter: a melody may be transposed from one key into another and remain

the same melody, though every note is different; and the same set of characters might figure in two novels with entirely different plots. But the form is not really the same when the matter is different, nor does the matter retain its identity unimpaired in another form. A musical composition has an altered effect when its key is changed, and the characters would not display precisely the same traits in the two sets of circumstances.

There is another reason why the two elements, form and matter, cannot be considered except in relation to one another. One and the same thing may be considered either as form or matter. A melody or chord is form with reference to the notes of which it is composed, but matter with relation to *e. g.*, a symphony into which it enters. It is combined with other melodies, modified in time or in key on different occasions, and always in some degree derives its actual effect from its relation to the whole. Similarly a tree in a landscape is form with reference to the colors and lines from which it is built up, but matter as regards the general design.

The conception of form and matter makes possible a definition of what have long been regarded as the two prime requisites of a work of art—unity and variety. Unity, in general, corresponds to form, variety to material. Without the former, a work of art would be destitute of distinctive quality: it could call forth no individual response in its beholder, nor, indeed, any response at all. If there were partial but incomplete unity, the stability essential to aesthetic satisfaction would go by the board: our emotions, instead of being harmonious and so at rest, would be arrayed against one another, and so compelled to seek satisfaction or reconciliation elsewhere. But the same lack of finality would be the result of a lack of variety: monotony is as destructive of repose, as provocative of restlessness, as is chaos.

To repeat: unity and variety, form and material, are not qualities which vary in inverse ratio. A unity which does not embrace, dominate, and order a wide variety of particulars falls short of genuine unity, and tends to become merely an added particular. We have an instance of this in the intellectual realm whenever a general principle is not perceived in the facts which it explains, but is thought of merely as an additional fact; in the realm of literature, when the plot does not spring out of and correlate the characters of the persons and the circumstances in which they are placed, but develops in accordance with conventional formulas or the requirements of popular demand. The *deus ex machina*, that is to say, is to be condemned as destructive of unity.

In similar fashion, not only is variety needed for unity, but unity is needed for variety. A multiplicity of detail can scarcely be kept in mind at all if it is unrelated. Not only the effect of the whole, but the effect of every part suffers. It is well known that anyone who has grasped the general principles of a science remembers the details much more fully and accurately than one who has to learn each one of them as an isolated fact. Acquaintance with the meaning of a language enables us to discriminate modifications of sound which were quite inaudible to us before we understood it. The rule is not that the more unity we have, the less variety; but rather, the more unity, the more variety, and *vice versa*. In precisely the same manner, the form and matter together are correlated with the expressiveness, the emotional quality, of a work of art, and the moment any one of them is detached from the other two, the work ceases to be a work of creative imagination and becomes a mechanical contrivance, either stupidly conventional or meaninglessly eccentric.

It is difficult to say more than this about matter, form, and expression so long as the fine arts in general, rather than

the specific arts, are in question. The media of the different arts, indeed, diverge so widely in their specific characteristics that such criteria of value as unity, variety, and expressiveness must be made much more definite before they can be applied at all. No merely abstract understanding of them is sufficient for their actual use in the appreciation or judgment of any sort of art: to know that a symphony must have unity and variety is to know exactly nothing, unless we can recognize a theme as it appears, for example, changed from major to minor, with changed orchestration, harmony, or rhythm, or combined with other themes. And to recognize it as the same without recognizing the modifications is to be little better off. There are, indeed, not a few people who cannot recognize a theme of any complexity if it recurs unchanged, or discover any intrinsic superiority to "Yankee Doodle" in "Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix" or in the Prize Song from "Die Meistersinger." Likewise there are those who cannot say of any two shades of color whether they harmonize or not. So specialized are our aptitudes, our sensitiveness to different sorts of material, that extraordinary ability in one art may be combined with extraordinary incapacity in another. Beethoven's taste in poetry was singularly unhappy, and competence in one art is nowhere regarded as involving a presumption of competence in another. The application of the general principles of aesthetics, consequently, must be independently carried out in relation to each of the arts.

CHAPTER V

ART AS CREATIVE

THE creative aspect of art, though it has been pointed out in the course of the foregoing discussion, is too important to be dismissed with no more than incidental treatment. We have tried to make clear that aesthetic experience is active throughout, that it enters into activities which are not solely or predominantly those ordinarily associated with the word "art," and that even when fine art itself is in question we can most fully understand it by conceiving it as doing rather than as something undergone. Bosanquet puts the matter very well when he says that the best clue generally available to aesthetic experience is the feeling that goes with finding the right word for what we have to say. To analyze this activity, to show how what is given at the start of the artist's labors is transmuted into the form in which it appears in the achieved result, is our next problem. When this is out of the way, we may consider the creative rôle played by art as a whole in human life.

Art, as we have said, is an expression of emotion, an expression which consists in envisaging the object of the emotion with those qualities which emotion has seized upon and laid bare as a revelation of its significance. The aesthetic embodiment or incarnation is never identical with the original object of the emotion or the mere sum of the impressions produced by that object. It is always such a reorganization of those impressions or facts as to extract their emotional meaning and value. The aesthetic impulse is present whenever we

feel impelled thus to express our feelings, to appreciate the object that calls them forth.

Emotions are in the first instance aroused by objects which have a practical relation to our welfare, and art, if it is to offer a foot-hold for feeling, must in some degree possess an affinity with such objects. This is not to say that it must be photographic or mimetic. Emotions, even in actual life, are exceedingly versatile, and can attach themselves to objects very different from those which first called them forth. But between their original stimuli and the stimuli with which they are eventually associated there must be some similarity in quality or meaning. Fear, *e. g.*, is in the animals excited by an enemy which threatens to kill and devour. This is a danger which is ordinarily remote from the life of men under civilized conditions. What we today seem chiefly to fear is the disapproval of our fellows; but the disapproval of our fellows, *i. e.*, ostracism, is the social equivalent of the wolf's menace to the sheep. Such similarity of meaning is one of the bridges between the objects which arouse emotion in the real world and those which play the same rôle in art.

Another bridge is resemblance in appearance. By virtue of what qualities, the next question is, can such resemblance exist? The answer is obvious: by virtue of formal qualities. Things possess characteristic quality or individuality through their form primarily. Upon this fact depends the possibility of representation or mimicry, and a too literal reading of the fact is responsible for the view that art is imitation. The fact itself is indisputable, whatever may be our judgment of such an interpretation of it. All familiar objects are recognized for what they are chiefly by their form, and increasingly so as the recognition becomes penetrating or assured. We say that a chair or table or a human face gives us a sensation, but this is a loose and colloquial manner of speaking.

It is the arrangement, and not except incidentally the particular quality of the sensations, that confers individuality upon any perception. A face is just the face it is because of the disposition of the features, the size of the eyes and distance between them, the curves of lips and nose, the proportions of the forehead. Even what seems a matter of simple sensation, *e. g.*, the complexion, is formal, in that it depends upon color-contrast and not upon mere color. It is true, as we have already seen, that form is nothing apart from the matter which it organizes: the distinction is one of aspects and not of things; but just for this reason, that form includes matter, it is possible to treat the whole of the expressiveness of a work of art as residing in its form. When we ask, then, how aesthetic creation occurs, the question resolves itself into this: how does the artist create his forms?

It is obvious that absolute creation, here as elsewhere, is impossible. No one can think of an absolutely new idea, or perform an absolutely novel act. All that can be done is to apply to an unfamiliar situation a familiar idea, introducing at the same time such modification as may make it appropriate; and no departure from custom, however revolutionary, is anything more than a particular act to which custom assigns a different cue or occasion. The creation of form, then, is always a re-creation of form, the adaption of something which is in essence familiar, to conditions other than those with which it has been conjoined in the past.

Ultimately the forms which appear in art must go back to those which instinct makes appealing to us. To repeat once more what has so often been asserted, instinct is a tendency to impose forms upon experience, to pick out, hold together in consciousness, and give characteristic order to a group of qualities. We have in the previous chapters traced this process through the experience of active living, and seen how by it the forms are recast, made more universal, and

at the same time more precise and concrete. We are now concerned with the process as the artist engages in it. But any form in art must ultimately go back to the forms to which we are spontaneously sensitive—those which our instinctive disposition makes appealing. Of course, the instincts need not be of the obvious and practically important type, such as pugnacity or self-display. They may be as central and pervasive as rhythm, or as incidental and trivial as our natural preference for some combinations of color rather than others. But of all the literally innumerable combinations of sensation which the artist can cause us to experience, only those have value which appeal to something in our native constitution. The truth is thus enforced that all creation is re-creation.

An analogy with intellectual creativeness will make the point clearer. The processes of nature began to be comprehensible when the explanation of what things do was sought, not in desires or purposes resembling those of human beings, but in the qualities of their components. Primitive man conceives nature animistically, supposes that when someone is drowned he is dragged under water by a river-god, or that when he is sick he is possessed by a spirit. In consequence he attempts to control nature by propitiatory or minatory rites, by offering sacrifices or performing a ceremony of exorcism. If we have learned that incense is less effective than a cork jacket in keeping us afloat in water, we are indebted for the discovery to the habit of asking about things, not what they want, but what they are made of. This, however, was a habit familiar to masons and cooks long before science was thought of. The difficulty lay in seeing that the fruitful method of approach to mortar and soup might also be the fruitful method of approach to the physical world as a whole; the solution of the difficulty was a creation, but certainly not a creation of something absolutely new.

In art as in science no problem can be solved without a clue, and originality consists in the aptitude for finding in experience clues to problems before which the stereotyped mind is helpless. Of course, as we have already seen, individuals differ enormously in their ability to find clues to problems of any given type. A writer who is at a loss before the simplest mathematical problem may be ready with a word to characterize a person or act, a word which would perpetually elude a mathematician to whom the other's insoluble problem is child's play. For such specific abilities there is at present no explanation to be found; and the gift for tying together the loose ends of a situation, for bringing order into chaos—for constructing forms, in a word—can be no more than illustrated.

We may consider first painting—its data, its ordinary forms, and the form which the artist seeks to achieve. The matter which the painter organizes is simply color, or rather colored surfaces. Line or contour is merely the meeting-place of two patches of color, and is not an independent material element. The elements with which the painter works are also the elements out of which the visible world is made up. All that the eye can actually see is a patchwork of colors in two dimensions, the vertical and the horizontal, and the painter's problem seems at first sight to be simply that of putting upon canvas spots of pigment corresponding in quality and arrangement to the colors in the surface before his eyes.

The matter, however, is not so simple. In the first place, no one on beginning to paint perceives only what he sees. Among other things, he imagines himself to see depth, *i. e.*, objects at varying distances from his eye. The church-spire a mile away *looks* more remote than the table across the room. Actually, it is only inferred to be more remote, but

in naive perception what is actually seen and what is inferred are indistinguishable. The distance of the object is judged chiefly by its apparent size, the clarity of its outlines, and its relation to intervening objects, the last-named of the criteria depending upon the fact that of two objects in the line of vision the nearer hides the more distant, and not *vice versa*. The sensations by which we experience distance are sensations of movement: a hundred yards means originally so much space to be walked through or run through. The arrangement of objects as seen must therefore be interpreted by memories of motions, of what are called "kinaesthetic" sensations, and when we actually look at any set of objects our perception of them contains a considerable proportion of such kinaesthetic memories. It contains also memories of touch, of what the objects, or similar objects, felt like when we were in contact with them. All of these qualities are of course suggested by modifications in the actual appearance of the objects; but we do not, in ordinary observation, pay any attention to these modifications, since we are concerned only with what they indicate. But the painter, since he cannot put on canvas the feeling of muscular exertion, or of smoothness, stickiness, or hardness, must search out the visual equivalents or signs of these things. Without them he would have no material from which to construct his painted form.

The initial difficulty, in a word, is that of seeing just what there is to be reproduced, and what is not there. We who are not painters and who are not accustomed to looking at things with a view to copying them, can find a very simple analogue in our own experience if we consider the appearance of printed words. Ordinarily we pay no attention to the sensations which words give us because it is with their meaning that we are concerned, and we do not stop to think of the signs by which that meaning is called to our minds.

In consequence we rarely notice misprints unless they are very flagrant; and this does not mean that we see the misspelling and ignore it, but that our actual perception is of the word correctly spelled. Our memory supplies the letters as they ought to be, and the sensations we get from the type are suppressed. Hence the difficulty of reading proof, which must be done more slowly and with greater care than we exercise when we are reading for the sense and not the shape of the words. Again, if we wish to get the individual look of a word, the quality of it as a group of marks on paper, we have to observe it for some time in isolation, forgetting what it means, and then, often suddenly, we see it change its character and appear altogether strange. This strangeness is the sign that for the first time we are really seeing it, and not vaulting over it on our way to its significance. Both the elimination of associations, and the discovery of sensuous immediacy, which we all achieve at times with objects so simple as a few black lines on a white background are what the painter must achieve with that indefinitely varied complexity which we call the visible world.

Hitherto in the discussion of this example we have assumed that it is the function of the painter to give a reproduction of what he actually sees. It is true that he must be able to do at least this much with some measure of success if he is to be a painter at all, but if his purpose is limited to copying he will cease to have a reason for existence as soon as a satisfactory method of color photography is discovered. Painting is much more than copying in the medium of color, and the reason is that the forms a painter gives to objects, so long as he is merely copying, are determined by conditions which have no aesthetic import. If the groups of colors he paints are to be recognizable as objects at all, they must have some form, but this form is only by accident aesthetic. We ordinarily group qualities together, *i. e.*, think

of them as things, because of their practical bearing, or because they function as a dynamic unity. The books in a library are chosen because their subject-matter is of interest, because they are needed for reference, because of all those we want these are the ones we can afford to have, etc. They are not chosen because a certain amount of wall-space is available for that sort of mural decoration, or because the backs of the books make an agreeable color-design. If a painter, painting the portrait of a man in his library, were asked to reproduce exactly all the books in the background, it is obvious that he would feel himself laid under an irrelevant and irksome compulsion; and this illustrates the principle by which all merely imitative art is condemned. If the criterion of fidelity to literal fact were taken seriously, the best landscape would be that which best reproduced the flora and fauna indigenous to the scene depicted, or the signs by which an archaeologist or an historian might reconstruct its past.

What the painter strives to do is not at all to add to the spectator's information, to do what could be better done by the photographer or scientist or novelist. It is to create forms which will reveal the possibilities inherent in light, color and space—something which he and only he can do. These possibilities are in some degree revealed by all the objects in the visible world, but most often in a degraded and insignificant form. Just so is human nature revealed in some degree in all that a human being does, but a novelist who should give the menus of all the meals a particular individual ever ate, or describe the material and cut of all the clothing he ever wore, would not be regarded as having taken us very far into the heart of his subject. All these things, since they have recognizable identity, have form, but the form is a superficial and trivial one, it is not an organizing of human activities which reveals those activities at their

most characteristic. The arrangements of actual things in space, the combinations of colors they may exemplify, are literally endless. A capable craftsman may reproduce them all in recognizable form, but unless the form reveals a genuinely individual perception, or, in Croce's terminology, "intuition," of colored and illuminated spaciousness, the results are no more works of art than are the notices of births, deaths, and marriages in a daily newspaper.

Painting, in brief, begins with the attempt to reproduce actual things, an attempt which required some measure of formal constructiveness, since it is the relation between the parts or elements of things that confers recognizable identity upon them. Gradually, as, for example, indication of perspective becomes possible, the material at the artist's command increases in volume and with it his mimetic powers. The form, however, is not fully aesthetic until it is freed from the motive of copying for copying's sake, and becomes interested in plastic embodiment as an independent value. At each stage of the process the forms of the preceding stage are superseded, as they are found to be in part conventional and in part irrelevant to the painter's purpose. If a picture is to tell a story, a certain set of conventional signs must be introduced, a certain form imposed, and this is at best irrelevant to the proper concern of painting. Indication of what has happened or of what is about to happen, by means at a painter's disposal, is of necessity inferential, which means, from the standpoint of plastic art, arbitrary or adventitious. The matter refuses to accept the form, which in consequence becomes as remote from aesthetic expressiveness as are the dots and dashes of the Morse telegraphic code from the ideas they transmit.

The question of the development of form in painting may be made more concrete by some references to the history of painting and the type of progress that it illustrates. It must

be made clear at once that this historical development does not follow the lines of abstract logical order which we have sketched out above. The first painters of whom there is any record did not begin with mere formless color, to which form was added as time went by. From the very start there was form of some sort, *i. e.*, recognizable identity of objects and organization of them into some sort of pattern, however feeble the organization. Progress in art, like progress in general, begins not with mere data but with a conventional ordering of data, and as it goes on what is conventional, irrelevant, and lifeless is pruned away, and a new arrangement of material found which better meets the purpose or purposes of art.

At the very beginning of modern art, we find painting subordinated to the end of illustration, especially illustration of religious themes. It was, in the main, almost perfectly flat, with little if any indication of solidity in objects or depth in space, and its figures and background were almost entirely conventional in form. Drawing was exclusively line-drawing, and though the objects were colored, they were constructed by means of line and shading. To the shapes so drawn, color was added as though by an after-thought.

With the Florentine painters, the use of perspective and the rendering of solidity were the chief preoccupation. Their pictures were conceived in three dimensions, and the objects in them were made to seem as tangible as possible, to possess what has been termed "tactile values." With this achievement, a new set of resources were put at the painter's disposal. He was encouraged to look for more in the real world, since he was able to provide new relationships between the elements in his compositions, and to endow his world with more of the fulness of reality. His new and more pregnant form enabled him to unify a greater

variety of material, and he was both more true to nature and more free to modify nature in the interests of his individual conception.

The Venetians lent to their pictures a much greater splendor by enriching their palette and adding to the formal arrangement in space the effects of color harmony. In addition, they used color as a constituent of objects with such effects that the objects appear more truly solid than in the Florentines. The freshness, depth and glow of swimming, harmonious, unifying color thus achieved, represented an enrichment of nature as it exists and a new instrument for lending it æsthetic significance. It represented a new form. In the Florentines generally, color and shape remained distinct and the effect of three-dimensional solidity which appears in the majority of their work is attained by the contrast of light and shadow rather than by color incorporated into the structure of objects. In many instances, that method of using light to the comparative exclusion of structural color, gives to the work of many of the Florentines, even Leonardo, the effect of deficiency of plastic means and leads to a somewhat stereotyped form which degenerated into an academic formula in some of the lesser men, Luini for example. With Rubens appeared a combination of the rich color of the Venetians with some of the technical devices of the Florentines for achieving the solidity of objects, and at the same time a heightened sense of movement and rhythm, a suggestion of forces acting in three dimensions, and of tumultuous activity. In his form, as in Titian's, the sharp contrast between line and color disappeared; color itself became more an instrument of draughtsmanship and one of the principal means of rendering solidity and of unifying the picture. Here as elsewhere, each new form makes available a new set of natural resources, and enables the painter so to modify and reshape

this material that the result not only more truly grasps but more greatly glorifies the real world.

In Velasquez, though color, space-organization, and movement show no further advance, an additional motif makes its appearance. Velasquez was a realist, or as much of a realist as his time permitted. Rubens made all that he touched grandiose, tempestuous; his pictures seem almost like the cataclysms of nature. Velasquez painted in a much more restrained style. He advanced upon all his predecessors, however, in his unimpassioned yet penetrating eye for the secret of his subject, in his ability to find in it that which lent itself to plastic representation and at the same time had characteristic significance. His concern was thus partly for subject-matter, yet not at all for "literary" subject-matter. He gave to all that he reproduced its plastic equivalent, and so promoted a real synthesis between color and shape, on the one hand, and the theme which they embodied. This of course had in some degree been done before, but in Velasquez there is far less reliance upon chance associations, such as the "nobility" of classic scenes, the religious feeling which springs from ecclesiastical subjects, the power that depends upon magnitude and indication of great objective forces.

In the Nineteenth Century there was a development of forms not unlike the development during the Renaissance. Starting with David and Ingres, we find a rather stilted conventionality of theme, a sharp division between line and color, with the color dull in David, brighter but still superficial in Ingres. With Delacroix comes a great access of richness in color, accompanied by an almost equal gain in movement and force. These latter, however, depended in part upon comparatively adventitious means, upon the suggestions provided by romantic and melodramatic subjects; but his more vivid color is an integral part of the

shapes he painted. Daumier scarcely used color at all, but he revealed the possibilities of organization, of solid reality, in tone, and recovered much of the formal power of Rembrandt.

Courbet introduced again the realism of Velasquez, added an earth-born force and pungency to his paintings, and so stripped away the conventionality of vision which kept Ingres and Delacroix at arm's length from their world. Manet carried realism to completion, achieved a degree of fidelity to his themes worthy of Velasquez, and increased the repertoire which in Courbet had been restricted to comparatively few aspects. Degas employed Ingres' line to express movement, and so aided in restoring to plastic art that type of organization. The Impressionists were in the main satisfied to use the forms already current in their time, except that by studying minutely the variations in color under varying illumination, they added new richness to the harmonies and contrasts which color presents, and in that sense augmented painting's armory of forms. Cézanne achieved a solidity of objects by a new form of modelling in color and by the aid of intentional distortions.

In Renoir the achievements of nineteenth century painting reached their consummation. In him, color and line and solidity fuse. Shapes are not drawn and modelled and then colored: color, combined with light, is the material out of which they are made up, and the color itself is of greater richness, variety, and brilliance than in any of his predecessors. Not only is color used for drawing and the rendering of solidity, but the color-relations themselves are a formal and unifying element in a high degree. His composition, finally, unites balance, rhythm, and movement, and the whole conveys perfectly the spirit of what is portrayed. In him, in a word, all the forms of his predecessors are united.

In considering the development of new forms, we may

have given the impression that such development is the same as progress towards an absolute goal. If so, the impression must be corrected. No doubt new values are revealed as painting goes on its way, but there is loss as well as gain. This is true of progress of all sorts. In life in general we have paid for our increased command over nature, our more humane disposition towards our fellows, and our more complete self-consciousness, by a loss of the simplicity and directness that cannot survive in a time of many and variously conflicting aims. Just how we have lost, we may see by comparing George Meredith with Homer. So in painting, as new effects become possible, old effects, not necessarily less valuable, become impossible. The naturalness of Manet may seem a great advance over the artificiality of David; but when we compare Manet with Titian or Tintoretto we are less certain that his style is the better. The stateliness, the magnificence, of the Renaissance portraits is something which our age cannot match, much as it may have surpassed the Renaissance in other respects. Progress, to repeat, is partial, and is always accompanied by retrogression. It is therefore futile to ask whether in any absolute sense Renoir and Cézanne represent an advance upon Giorgione and Rubens.

If we turn to literature we find the same gradual disentanglement of what is characteristic or essential in experience from the adventitious or irrelevant material in which, for primitive apprehension, it is set.

The form of a drama may be regarded as the working-out of a situation, the episode or series of episodes which follow from the interaction of a set of characters who are brought together under particular conditions. It is the revelation of what such a situation does to such characters, and the situation and characters are chosen with reference to a

single effect. In "Othello," for example, we have the state of affairs created by a misalliance, a marriage between two persons of antecedents so diverse that any understanding between them is precarious, and the condition is complicated, and given tragic import, by the presence of a third person who wishes and is able to foment discord. Iago is able to persuade Othello that Desdemona is false to him; Othello thereupon kills Desdemona, and on finding that he has been misled and that Desdemona is innocent, kills himself. Upon Othello's suicide, that is to say his pronouncement and execution of judgment upon himself, hangs the moving and tragic effect of the whole play, since it vindicates his essential nobility, his power of acting as judge in his own case no less justly than in his wife's. If he were a lesser man, his ruin might be pathetic but it would not be tragic. Just that issue, in other words, is essential to a form in which the tragic emotion can be adequately embodied.

So, at any rate, Shakespeare must have felt, and with him was the feeling of his own day, and certainly of many days since. It is impossible, however, to avoid asking the question whether the same situation and its issue would have the same emotional force today. We may observe that its force depends essentially upon acceptance by the reader or spectator of a set of conventions about jealousy, "honor," and retributive justice. Othello's contrition, and his consequent vengeance upon himself, are the result of his discovery that Desdemona was innocent. Had she been guilty, as he at first thought she was, the assumption is that he could have done no less than kill her to keep his honor unstained. His nobility is founded upon his unwillingness to compromise with evil. But if we no longer regard retributive justice as divinely ordained, if it has come to appear as a barbarous, or at least a mediaeval superstition, Othello appears at the end pathetic, doubtless, as the victim of an

illusion, but fundamentally stupid, and so not fully tragic. The form of the play, that is to say, no longer seems adequate to Shakespeare's purpose: it has ceased to be of universal human significance, and become essentially a document in Elizabethan conventionality.

The same sort of decay in a literary form or motif was pointed out a few years ago in a review, published in the "New Republic," of Mr. D. H. Lawrence's "Sons and Lovers." It was once, the writer said, the fashion to make marriage the climax of love stories, and to represent the difficulties to be surmounted as residing in external circumstances, such as parental objections, the machinations of rivals, or any of the familiar causes of slips between cup and lip. But modern writers, with a more adequate sense of what is likely to come between individuals, reverse the order of events. Marriage is not necessarily or even usually the consummation of this particular relationship: it may be merely the prelude to it; and the really significant events may come after the ground is cleared and the persons thus set free from irrelevant hindrances begin to discover whether or not they can enjoy a richer experience together than either could find in isolation. In this instance, as in the former, a form has been shown by experience to lack true expressiveness, to be inadequate to the content that is to go into it.

The value or finality of a form cannot, as these examples clearly indicate, be judged by any formula which can be abstractly stated and applied infallibly. Its expressiveness must be judged by the reaction of an individual as a complete personality, by its appeal to feeling. This reaction, this feeling, are the outgrowth of a multitude of habits, convictions, and preferences, of which many, and those not the least important, cannot be brought into consciousness by their possessor. We all take many things as a matter of course, as Shakespeare doubtless took the convention

that a wife's faithlessness dishonored a husband if it went unavenged, or that a king was more interesting than a commoner. Absolute finality, in a word, is impossible in aesthetic judgment or appreciation. But absolute finality has already taken flight from science, it seems to be abandoning morals and its persistence in dogmatic religion is a fact which lends itself to various interpretations. If no creation in art is final, we may find solace in the thought that future artists will not be reduced to a traffic in conventionalities.

The creative aspect of art is not exhausted when we have described the process by which less expressive forms are discarded in favor of more expressive. It is often assumed that the history of a work of art is complete when we have said that it is the production of an artist who, in the presence of an object or situation, has reproduced, not indeed the situation itself, but the aspect of it which he feels as moving or significant. We ordinarily suppose, in other words, that the direction of influence is *from* the object or fact, through the prism of the artist's personality, *to* the work of art, be it novel, poem, drama, or picture. This supposition is largely responsible for the view already referred to, that art is something idle or cloistered, that those who can live real life do so, and that those who cannot take refuge in looking at pictures, reading novels, and listening to music. The artist then becomes the minister to the feeble in spirit, the purveyor of dreams, the builder of the ivory tower. Even if the devotee of art does not go the whole way and become what is disparagingly called an aesthete, his enjoyment of art is thought of as a relaxation, a diversion of his energies into channels remote from the main current of life.

The truth is, of course, that all great art not only registers the reaction of humanity upon the world, but itself remakes both the world and humanity. It is true, doubtless, that we

observe the beauty in the world and then, some of us at least, paint landscapes; but the story is only half told unless it be added that we look at painted landscapes and then find the world beautiful. If we find it difficult to recognize or see the implication of this fact, it is because we have so long assumed that the purpose of art, and of intellect and morals is to copy, to conform to a standard which already exists and which ought to exert authority over us.

Only yesterday, as historic time goes, Tennyson could write of the British army, and suppose the words a compliment,

“Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.”

We still hear the question asked, What is the purpose of the world, of life? What is everything for? under the supposition that the question can be answered once and for all, or else that there is no purpose. But it is at least possible that the question is idle or meaningless, and that the important, the real question is, What purpose can we give to the world? The feudal conception, the conception that we, either as members of the race or as individuals, have an appointed niche in the world, a rôle to play or a destiny to fulfill, is so deeply ingrained in us that it is hard to realize that there may be an alternative. It is reinforced by law, by all popular conventions, by nearly all the literature of the past, and certainly by all the established or institutional religions. All of these take it as axiomatic and there are ascertainable duties for us which are also final and not to be experimented with, and a determined or determinable end, goal or purpose in things about which we were not consulted and can have nothing to say.

There is some ground for supposing, in contrast to this, that our destiny may be of our own making, and what we ought to think, feel and do can never be fixed in advance.

If it is true, to use an expression of Bergson's, that "the gates of the future remain wide open," it must also be true that we, the makers of the future, must ourselves be in process of making, that our sensibilities, thoughts, and desires are constantly undergoing change and redirection. The human mind then appears as something not finally shaped and formed, but perpetually re-formed, and this at its own initiative. This conception has in some degree been made familiar by Mr. James Harvey Robinson's book, "The Mind in the Making," and the drift of opinion, in psychological and other quarters, seems to be toward some such view. We are here concerned with it only in its aesthetic aspect. What, we must ask, is the relation of art to the making of our minds, and of our mind's world?

There is a saying of La Rouchefoucauld's, that few people would imagine themselves to be in love if they had never read about it, which is likely to seem a paradox to the conventionally minded. It is especially likely to seem paradoxical to such as have learned to weave their fancies about biological half-truths. What could be more obvious, these persons may say, than that the attraction between the sexes, so far from being a convention—above all, a literary convention—is an absolutely fundamental and essential part of human nature? Romantic love, and its practical corollary the monogamous family, are clearly indicated by man's inborn mating instinct: they are the product of nature, and man's invention or imagination had nothing to do with them.

The objection confuses an institution based upon or centering about an instinct with the instinct itself. It is undoubtedly true that if there were no attraction between the sexes the race would come to an end. Such attraction, however, is an utterly different matter from romantic love as we know it. The latter is a relationship which, as an ideal at least, involves the union of two individuals in num-

berless respects which have nothing to do with the preservation of the race. It involves an orientation of two personal lives with reference to one another, a sharing or pooling of interests, a bond of obligation which takes precedence over at least all other personal obligations. The whole affair, as an interest which at its height may organize life as a whole, has been made appealing to the imagination and so persuasive to the will, by the vast amount of fiction, poetry, drama, and ritual which are the work of those who have particularly felt the force of the bond in question and known how to give it aesthetic expression.

The national state, the body which makes wars and has a kind of independent existence and life of its own, has been similarly vivified and sanctified by art. As Mr. Bertrand Russell points out, the glory of nations and their achievements is a large part of the burden of Homer, Shakespeare and the Bible; it is made visible in national architecture and moving in patriotic music. Again, there are other reasons than aesthetic for the citizen's devotion to his state. Human nature has shown itself, in the Middle Ages and often in the Orient, quite indifferent to patriotism, to imperialism, to war carried on not for brigandage or as defense against brigandage, but for the sake of national honor or glory. Even the radicals, who believe that war is always a device of the capitalist class for its own aggrandizement at the expense of the underlying population, really assert that already existing patriotic fervor is set in motion by economic forces, not that economic forces are in isolation the sufficient cause of war. Flags and national anthems and national myths, whatever we think of their aesthetic value, are aesthetic in intent: their purpose is expressive and not, except incidentally, utilitarian.

We are prone to take it for granted that the realities of life, the things that endure and cannot be thought away, are

its physical setting and the instruments whereby the satisfaction of its bodily needs is assured—ploughed fields, factories, cities, the courthouse and the prison. But a fraction of the energy that goes into these things would suffice if men desired only to gratify their appetites and safeguard their bodies. The rest goes for pomp and ceremony and glamor, for “useless” activities which legend had made appealing or impressive. It is by no mere figure of speech that we can say of artists that they are “the movers and shakers of the world forever,” or that “one man with a dream . . . shall go forth and conquer a crown”—though his contemporaries may not see him wear it. Those who dominate the future are they who determine what thoughts it shall think and what emotions it shall feel, and the artist, who in expressing his own feelings sets the fashion for others’, is not the least among that number. And the term “artist” is not to be restricted to Michael Angelo and Dante and Shakespeare and their like; it includes all those, unnamed, perhaps, in history, who have found expression for their unique and individual vision, and so added it to the world’s heritage.

CHAPTER VI

DEGREES OF AESTHETIC SATISFACTION

SECTION I.—ART AND DAY-DREAMING

IN the preceding chapters, we have described the fine arts as constituting a vicarious enlargement of experience by which the interests that find only partial and inadequate satisfaction in the world of affairs are provided with a congenial sphere of activity. This conception may be illustrated negatively, and its meaning more precisely defined, by a contrast between art and something which has a number of features in common with it—something which may, indeed, seem to fit the definition of art. This something is what, in ordinary terminology, is called “imagination,” though another expression, also from popular speech, fits it more exactly—“day-dreaming.” In technical terminology it is called “phantasy-building.” Day-dreams, like works of art, are a refuge for unsatisfied desires. Of the many things we want, we actually get but few; but in our reveries we have all that the heart can desire. To the eye of the beholder, our circumstances may seem shabby, our abilities commonplace, and our persons unlovely. To our own, when resolutely fixed upon them, they may appear somewhat the same, though probably never quite so much so. But it is not often that our eye is resolutely fixed upon them. At the first opportunity it looks away from them in their ordinary form, and seeks and finds a golden counterfeit. Then it is that beggars ride, that the humble sit in the seats of the mighty, and that unrequited love exists no more. We no longer

find in the past anything to blush for, nor anything to fear in the future.

Unfortunately, the change is unmade soon after it is made. Castles in Spain are delightful but not permanent. Even while they last they are never quite convincing, at least while we retain our sanity. Unless they possess some footing on the solid earth, their flimsiness is apparent to those who inhabit them. This footing, in the sense of actual reality, they cannot of course be given, but—to drop figurative expressions—a certain amount of actual sensation will vivify a great deal of imagery, and that degree of contact with actuality is what much that passes for art is designed to provide. The country estate, the retinue of servants, the motor cars and yachts and throngs of admirers which our fancy cannot quite make real, become much more real if we read of them or see them on the stage or in the moving picture. A very large proportion of all paintings, the enormously greater part of fiction and drama, and almost the whole of the “art of the screen” has no other purpose than to supply this body, this solidity, to day-dreams. We live ourselves into the personages who are presented to us there, share their possessions, and celebrate their triumphs. Hence the endowment of the hero and the heroine with all that is enviable, impressive and praiseworthy, hence the ignobility of all who oppose them, and hence the happy ending.

To see the relation of day-dreaming to art we must go back to psychological fundamentals. We have seen that instinct or emotion, at every stage of development, expresses itself in envisaging, in terms appropriate to its own specific bent, the object that stimulates it. Such envisagement, when the emotion is guided by intelligence, is tentative: the admirable or contemptible traits with which the subject is invested remain in the hypothetical realm, and effort is made to find out how far they represent the truth. But for

undisciplined emotion they are absolute, and, as when love is infatuation, no reconsideration of them is admissible. When emotion, instead of proceeding to its proper goal, loses itself in sloth or is paralyzed by the difficulty of making itself effective, its natural tendency to dwell in fancy upon its object absorbs all the energy which ought to go into action, and it dreams endlessly of the accomplishments which are beyond its power. There is no stage of enlightenment and discipline in the instinctive life which is finally and completely adequate, able to meet all emergencies: the habitual expression of an emotion may always fail to do justice to a new situation. Therefore day-dreaming may appear at every level of development. It may find expression in action no less than in thought, in refusing to see actual things as they are, as well as in flying for refuge to things wholly remote from reality. These alternatives correspond, respectively, to evasions of a problem in life, and evasion in imagination. We shall begin with consideration of the former.

Suppose, for example, that I wish to repair a break in a friendship. Someone to whom I am attached has given me what I take to be ground for complaint by accepting the offer of my services in a time of difficulty, and then disregarding my wishes in a matter in which his acceptance of my aid ought to have bound him to consider them. If he were going to act counter to them, he ought to have at least given some reason. In the absence of any explanation of his action, I feel that I have been used as a means to an end, and discarded when useful no longer. My former experience of him has made it difficult to believe that he is really mercenary and ungrateful, but until I can see the justification for his behavior, I cannot with self-respect continue on my former terms with him. One thing is sure: there has been an error somewhere.

It is needless, for the purposes of the illustration, to consider all possible alternatives: two will be sufficient. I may have estimated my supposed friend wrongly in the past, or the situation may not have seemed to him to involve on his part the obligations that I considered it to involve. Have I been unreasonable in my expectations, or was there something in my actions which exempted him from making the return which I regarded as my due? If I am at all acquainted with human nature, I know that men, myself included, act from very mixed motives, that they find the difficulties of others not displeasing, since these give them the opportunity to enjoy their own security and power, and that it is very easy to make an enemy in doing a favor, if the favor is enjoyed as a means of gratifying one's own self-esteem at the expense of another's. To make sure that I have a grievance, I must be certain that my own motives were entirely disinterested, and that nothing in my manner could have been taken to indicate condescension, pleasure in my relatively advantageous rôle, or the impersonal benevolence of the professional altruist. In other words, I must overhaul my estimate both of my erstwhile friend and of myself, and try to see anew the incident from both points of view. If I succeed in solving the problem, I discover wherein I have been at fault, and wherein he has been at fault, the point at which we were at cross-purposes, the readjusted attitude and reformed habits required of both of us if relations are to be resumed. What the whole incident means is that the intelligent transformation of practice and feeling described in Chapter III has broken down or at least been halted, and that effort is required for its renewal. I have failed in the art of life and must retrace my steps and seek fresh enlightenment.

In the discovery of traits and purposes previously overlooked in the person I supposed myself to know and in myself, there is the same increasing grasp of the real world,

with corresponding clarification of my will and the means to its attainment, that we found to be everywhere the fruit of intelligence. The fruits of day-dreaming are very different. The day-dreamer refuses to meet his problems. In the instance just given, the problem cannot be solved without effort and at least some degree of discomfort. No matter where the blame lay, I am revealed as inadequate in my judgment of others and of myself, and the painful necessity is laid upon me to learn to see and do differently. This necessity may be shirked in a variety of ways. I may elect to feel that those I care for should be forgiven even unto seventy times seven, and overlook the apparent inconsiderateness and ingratitude on my friend's part, supposing the while that my indolence, which forgets that justice must be rendered before generosity can be offered, is really magnanimity. Or I may feel that my friendship has been outraged and my dignity offered an affront, and in breaking off relations see in myself one who is above associating with the unworthy. In either case, whatever was amiss is unrectified, and I remain the self-righteous pharisee who is guilty of the very disloyalty of which he complains. Whether sentimentality or vindictiveness carries the day, I remain unadjusted to reality, shut up in the world of my own preconceived ideas.

In the art which is really day-dreaming, the same shirking of issues appears, with the same results. The painter who sees with a conventional eye, who makes of the original discoveries of other painters a mere set of devices for showing again what they have already shown, is evading the labor of looking upon nature for himself. Of course he must be taught by his predecessors to see as much as they have seen, but he has no reason for existence unless he can sharpen the vision they have bequeathed him in order to see something more for himself. Otherwise he makes merchandise of stale sentiment and second-hand prettiness.

So also with the novelist or dramatist. The day-dreamer who seeks to produce literature is always he who appeals to conventional sentiments, who puts before us the stock properties of the literary *mise-en-scène*. His situations, the purposes, sorrows and delights of his personages, are worn shapeless by long usage. The feelings to which they appeal are rigid as iron: they amount to what in psychology are called "fixations." Any wave of strong popular feeling provokes an outpouring of such printed day-dreams, all melodramatic in essence, all, that is to say, invitations to the reader to take sides violently and be assured that whatever he is, is right. A nation at war furiously repudiates the idea that the enemy has anything good in him, and its prejudice is at once fed by a flood of novels and plays in which the angelic and diabolic rôles are fittingly assigned. Indeed, every sentiment widely diffused throughout society provides a market for works of a corresponding type, so that sentimental, patriotic, and pornographic books need be written with only passable skill to be assured of at least some success.

A word which the years since 1914 have made increasingly familiar to all of us, is almost a perfect equivalent for day-dreaming. Propaganda, though its motives may be different, has results wholly analogous to those of day-dreaming. It is the art of putting only one side of a case, of concealing, slurring over, or belittling whatever contradicts what we want to believe, or opposes what we want to do. It is the voice of crude instinct, howling down anything that could give it pause. Of course, to arrive at a conclusion and to try to persuade others that it is true, is not propaganda; the distinction between the two is that honest argument seeks to bring to light the objections to its thesis and to give them all the weight that is their due, while propaganda attempts to huddle objections out of sight. Melodrama is to art what propaganda is to argument.

Among the more gifted and intelligent of contemporary purveyors of melodrama is Mr. Upton Sinclair.* His books are not necessarily to be condemned because they were written to illustrate a particular view of the world and its short-comings: so was the "Divine Comedy." The ground of complaint against Mr. Sinclair is not that he has convictions, but that they spring from an experience which passionate partisanship has blinded to every aspect of the truth but one. It is possible to write of the hardships and oppressions to which labor is subject without making, as does Mr. Sinclair, the oppressed laborer a combination of all but the most flagrantly inappropriate virtues, and the victim, never of circumstances, but always of the heartless selfishness or malice of his exploiters. The question whether socialism is a desirable or practicable scheme of reform does not enter the question as here considered.

A writer with his eye on the facts, either of the abstract economic situation or of the situation as it appears to the laborer himself, would never write as does Mr. Sinclair. The hardships of the exploited may be as great as any propagandist would have us believe, but it is an offense against intellectual integrity to imply that they are those which, in the same position, a person of other nurture, habits, and standards of life would be called upon to endure. Mr. Sinclair, to make the light of martyrdom in which he surrounds the laborer as vivid as possible, suggests or implies that absence of the daily bath, of opportunity to hear symphony concerts, of the sort of association with his fellows that would be craved by, let us say, a character out of Henry James—that these things are a cruel deprivation to him. Correspondingly, we find slurred over the ignorance,

* These comments on Mr. Sinclair were in the main suggested to me by an unsigned article in the "Freeman." I have not the date.

lack of self-control, inability to understand general issues and to take an impartial and inclusive view of public affairs, which, far more than the malice of oppressors, stand between the proletariat and a more satisfactory way of life.

Mr. Sinclair thus falls short both as an ally of labor and as an artist seeking to depict an experience. The intelligent friend of labor, or the artist interested in the life of those who gain their bread by physical toil, would attempt to see exactly where the shoe really pinches, to discover what the individual of the submerged classes does desire and what resources he really has for getting it. In doing so, such a writer would strive, instead of covering up the short-comings of his protagonist, to bring them fully, though to be sure sympathetically, to light, since only so can they be understood and, from the practical point of view, corrected. The West Virginia miner who read "King Coal" would be encouraged by it, never to take pains to fit himself for the performance of the function which, well or ill, the capitalist and the promoter do perform, but to feel himself merely wronged and abused and unjustifiably kept down, to nurse a grievance and to indulge in self-pity. Mr. Sinclair has not achieved the portrayal of any human being, has conveyed no insight into any actual experience, but has provided a drug for those who wish without understanding to enjoy the pleasures of becoming indignant and lachrymose—either over themselves or over others.

Art and day-dreaming are alike in that they both show us a world nearer to the heart's desire than the actual world. Otherwise they are antithetical. Art is conduct and feeling enlightened by "fundamental brain-work" and finding the heart of their desire, entering by sympathy and imagination into the wider world of nature and man. Day-dreaming is conduct and feeling so dull or so feeble that they can only shrink into a private cell with painted walls.

SECTION II.—EASY AND DIFFICULT BEAUTY

It is a familiar fact that not all works of art are to be appreciated with equal ease. The reasons for this are various. Partly they are intrinsic to the material or medium of art. We have already spoken of the fact that individuals differ in their responsiveness to different types of material. A keen eye for color may accompany tone-deafness, and a sense of the rhythms and consonances of language is not incompatible with total indifference to all arts but poetry. Such sensitiveness is likely to, though it need not, carry with it a corresponding power of synthesis or comprehension. Anyone naturally interested in mathematical relations is probably superior in his grasp of such relations to another individual whose attention, except under compulsion, refuses to linger over them. Some of what is generally considered difficult art undoubtedly owes its difficulty to this fact: the complications in its material are such as to defy the efforts of any but those exceptionally gifted in its comprehension. A complicated fugue in music is difficult for that reason: to follow a number of melodies that are being simultaneously played is impossible for anyone whose musical perceptions are of a low order, although such a person may be moved by music of the simpler sort—more deeply moved, perhaps, than many who are more highly endowed.

Difficulties of this sort are, in the present state of our knowledge, inexplicable. The psychology of individual difference is as yet practically a sealed book. Some of the differences between individuals have been described and classified, but the principle of their explanation has not been found, or really even suggested. There is another form of difficulty, however, which is much less a matter of individual variability. We all know that there are times when we are tired or indifferent, when we resent any tax put upon our

feelings or our attention. We may be able when at our best to listen with pleasure to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony or "Götterdämmerung," or to read "The Return of the Native" or "King Lear," but for the moment we are not, as we say, "up to it." What we have to inquire into is the difference between what requires our best attention and the most energetic application of our powers, and what can be enjoyed when we are in a relaxed and hum-drum frame of mind.

Before attempting to explain the difference, we must have clearly in mind the precise points of distinction. These are clearly and adequately given by Bosanquet in his "Three Lectures on Aesthetics," and we shall here follow his account of them. He describes difficult beauty as "triumphant beauty," and considers its marks to be intricacy, tension, and "width."

The first of these requires little explanation, since the ground of the difficulty is a matter of universal experience. It is not unrelated to the question of intrinsic incomprehensibility of material, since, *e. g.*, a person of slight musical perceptiveness is unable to perceive any but simple melodies and harmonies: more complicated ones pass him by entirely. The only impression he gets from them is that of a jumble of unrelated sounds. But even when dealing with material which we can grasp, we find the apprehension easier if there is little to take in than if there is much. We may be capable as a rule of following a complicated argument in economics, of keeping in mind a large number of facts and principles, and yet at a particular moment find ourselves utterly at sea in the presence of a much simpler argument. Our grasp or appreciation of masses of detail seems to be a part of our general capacity, and to be affected by whatever affects that. Illness or fatigue seriously interfere with it, and so of course does preoccupation with an irrelevant topic of thought.

The difficulty seems to have no particular aesthetic quality or significance, and frequently, indeed, to be merely physiological.

The second, tension, touches much more closely the expressiveness proper to a work of art, and does call for more precise explanation. The difficulty arises not out of intellectual incapacity or lethargy, it is emotional. Bosanquet's words relative to this deserve quotation. "The kind of effort involved is not exactly an intellectual effort; it is something more, it is an imaginative effort, that is to say, one in which the spectator, without resting upon a fixed system, like that of accepted conventional knowledge, has to frame for himself as a whole an experience in which he can 'live' the embodiment before him. When King John says to Hubert the single word 'death' the word is in a sense easily apprehended; but the state of the whole man behind the broken utterance may take some complete transformation of mental attitude to enter into. And such transformation may not be at all easy or comfortable; it may be even terrible, so that in Aristotle's phrase the weakness of the spectator shrinks from it."

By "width" Bosanquet means appeal to a more inclusive set of considerations and scale of values than those to which we ordinarily have recourse. Humor, comedy, irony, satire—especially satire of what we respect and admire—are difficult for this reason. To the very literal-minded they are impossible, because such persons cannot see themselves and their interests from any alien point of view. To quote Bosanquet again: "In strong humor or comedy (*e. g.*, that of Rabelais) you have to endure a sort of dissolution of the conventional world. All the serious accepted things are shown you topsy-turvy; beauty, in the narrow and current sense, among them. The comic spirit enjoys itself at the expense of everything; the gods are starved out and

brought to terms by the birds' command of the air, cutting off the vapor of sacrifice on which they lived; Titania falls in love with Bottom the weaver; Falstaff makes a fool of the Lord Chief Justice of England. All this demands a peculiar strength to encompass with sympathy its whole width. You must feel a liberation in it all; it is partly like a holiday in the mountains or a voyage at sea; the customary scale of everything is changed, and you yourself perhaps are revealed to yourself as a trifling insect or a moral prig. And it is to be noted, that you need strength to cover all this without losing hold of the centre. If you wholly lost the normal view of all these things which you are to see upside down, the comedy would all be killed dead at once. It is the contrast that makes the humor. If religion is not a serious thing to you, there is no fun in joking about it."

How, we must ask, can this distinction in the grades of beauty be fitted into the scheme already outlined? For difficult beauty, as Bosanquet observes, is only an intensified and heightened form of easy beauty: it is more of the same thing, not something different. The answer to this question may be indicated at once, and the premises for the conclusion subsequently. The difference is in the degree of reconstruction of previous habits, assumptions, ways of looking at or appreciating things. Day-dreaming, easy beauty, and difficult beauty then fall into an ascending scale, according as old habits are confirmed, are altered as to incidentals but left essentially intact, and finally are radically reorganized. The most difficult beauty is always revolutionary; not, obviously, in the political or social sense, but in the sense that its appreciation involves the fullest exercise of the spectator's powers and, since no familiar situation can do this, brings about a far-reaching transformation of them.

We may take, as an example of beauty involving the ten-

sion referred to, Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind." There is no intellectual problem in the interpretation of this: prosaically expressed, it is simply the appeal of a man, who feels his strength becoming more and more inadequate, to one of the forces of nature to enter into him, or rather, to carry him out of himself, and add its energies to his own. Anyone can see so much; but to feel in the events of the dying year one's own decline, and to seek succor from it in surrender of one's self to the autumnal wind that bears, along with dead leaves, the seeds of awakening life—that is not so easy. We do not ordinarily live in the realization that life comes out of death, and to envisage in the imagery of the poem the dissolution that is the prelude to new life, and so to welcome it, is to live much above our common level of feeling and imagination.

An equal departure from ordinary modes of living is involved in the appreciation of what has been referred to as "width." To see the absurd side of ourselves and what we like or look up to is always an effort, often a disagreeable effort, and one which we shirk whenever possible. Laughter, as Bergson says, contains a strain of hostility, even of cruelty, and to be hostile to anything that has become a part of ourselves is no easy exploit. We do it, if at all, by assuming a point of view more inclusive than that habitual to us, and from it seeing the incongruities, sentimentalities, and weaknesses of the latter. Hence the appreciation of comedy is an agent of growth: by it we see ourselves in perspective, take a cooler and saner view of our pretensions. It brings, in other words, a reconstruction of the self as an entirety—a fact which is the source of the difficulty and the ground of the reward when the difficulty is surmounted.

If we turn to what has been called "easy" beauty, we find that no such extensive break with our every-day selves is called for by it. If there is to be any art at all, there must

be some novelty, some call upon us to live ourselves into a situation not wholly familiar. There is consequently no absolutely effortless enjoyment of beauty; so long as we keep to the real world, the recognition of what is there requires some bending of our sensibilities to something independent of them. But between the absolutely stereotyped, and revolutionary novelty, there are many intermediate stages. A lawyer, after handling a thousand cases, may have discovered nothing which appreciably alters or increases the general knowledge of the principles underlying statutes and legislation. But if he is a man of ability, if his practice has been successful, he cannot have failed to discover applications of the laws on which any case must rest, limitations of the validity of each through conflict with others, etc., which enables him with vastly greater skill to judge of the possibilities of pleading successfully any particular case. His range may be circumscribed, but within it he has a resourcefulness and sureness of touch which represents a high degree of mastery. He is a practical artist, and the fact that his artistry is minor does not make it spurious.

Mrs. Wharton's "Age of Innocence" may serve as an illustration of the same thing in the field of art proper. The scale of values disclosed in it, the estimate of people, their ruling passions, and the situations in which they are placed, are essentially conventional. But it is a scale of values firmly grasped and applied sensitively, intelligently, and consistently. The author's workmanship is extraordinarily competent, and her people are clearly conceived and not inadequately realized. The range of her imagination is limited, she is never epic, never tragic, never inspired; but neither is she ever incompetent.

At the same time there is, even in the book in question, a certain amount of truckling to popular prejudice, which

amounts to encouragement of day-dreams. In "A Son at the Front" the day-dreaming is much more in evidence. Mrs. Wharton, in spite of her satiric treatment of the ritual of "society" in the "House of Mirth," is essentially a part of that world, and is never able to view its traditions with whole-hearted detachment. It is a world in which "good taste" reigns supreme, in which a set of convictions are assumed which make possible personal relations characterized by a maximum of decorum, by an extremely acute sense of the sensibilities of all concerned. But no essential violence to the idols of the tribe is ever tolerated, nor are any others really recognized. Mrs. Wharton's world is that of the drawing-room, or at least of its purlieus; when she ventures far afield, as in "Ethan Frome," the presence of drawing-room standards and habits of perception is flagrant. The tragedy of the actors in that drama is obviously that of people who have failed to find the kind of satisfaction desired by such as seek to draw harmony from the strings of refined sentiment; the New England farm is there only as mural decoration.

All Mrs. Wharton's men point the same moral—they are a colorless and bloodless lot, a set of phantoms fit for the exercise of feminine fancies. In her war books, the already mentioned "A Son at the Front" and "The Marne," the fashionable and orthodox view of things rises above everything: the essential rightness of the cause with which the author sympathises is never to be questioned. We have here propaganda and not literature; and the quality of propaganda is present not because Mrs. Wharton sympathises with France and its war policy, but because she has so obviously never felt the force of the facts which shape the feelings of those who do not feel with her. Whether right or wrong, she is totally unable to appreciate the point of view opposed to her own. She is not expressing a genu-

inely individual grasp of things, but dressing up rhetorically a view fundamentally stereotyped.

Another artist of powers meriting respect but not the highest respect is Monet. The elements in his pictures are knit together by a well-developed sense of design, acting upon an observation and feeling for light and color which in his day represented an essential advance upon the current perception of these things. His pictures are fresh, vivid, and unified, though the fact that both what he saw and his method of rendering it have since become common coin, makes him at present seem almost academic. He left for those who followed him, above all for Renoir and Cézanne, a colorful vision of what meets the eye when it looks at Nature; but it is a vision relatively superficial, and Renoir and Cézanne, each in his own way, deepened it and made it richer and more powerful.

The account of difficult and easy beauty is far from complete, however, if we leave it to be supposed that the more difficult art is always the greater. In spite of the apparent contradiction with what has already been said, we may say that it is never the greater, or the greatest. The greatest, doubtless, is that which contains the largest proportion of creativeness and individuality, which involves most enlargement of mind, change of habits, travail of spirit. But if an artist has something new and individual and universally significant to say, he may say it with very varying degrees of clarity; in other words, he may give his reader or listener or spectator much or little assistance in absorbing it. George Meredith, for example, suffers by this test. It is impossible to read him without the consciousness that there is something pungent, individual, intensely alive and weighty in what he has to say. But his style is often so mannered and tortured, so little freed from tricks of speech, efforts to be epigrammatic, things merely peculiar to him and of no uni-

versal value, that his reader's path is made unnecessarily thorny. It is exceedingly difficult to avoid the conclusion that if he had thought more clearly, if he had disengaged his ideas from an admixture of crotchets and conceits which are of purely local and temporary interest, his ideas themselves would have been of more validity, and he would have been a far greater artist.

The same may be said of Francis Thompson, who had the poet's temperament in nearly if not quite the highest degree, but whose mode of expression often seems labored and eccentric, filled with metaphors which tantalize and bewilder as much as they enlighten. Both of these writers are arresting and important, but of both of them it could with justice be said that if they had been clearer they would have been greater still. Their difficulty largely resides in the narrowness of their vision, their inability to make it objective and visible from all sides, to show roads whereby it could be reached from more than one quarter.

In this instance, as previously, the contrast may be illustrated by a parallel contrast in science. Darwin was not the first to suggest the conception of evolution. That conception, with all that it implies, was profoundly at variance with ways of thinking that in the course of many centuries had worked themselves into every fibre of the human mind. Absolute security and finality, something certain and unchanging to rest upon, knowledge so sure that the questions it answers will never have to be reopened—these things are little better than dreams if evolution is true. Consequently, pre-Darwinian evolution never seriously affected men's convictions, it did not take root in their minds and grow into all their thoughts. But Darwin saw evolution not as an isolated idea, but as an organizing principle for a whole domain of science. By following it out, showing its ubiquitous application and the confirmation which many independent sources of knowl-

edge brought to it, he was able to affect an intellectual revolution which seems to be in a fair way to leave nothing where it was before. Of course the revolution was not completed overnight—it is not complete yet, for that matter—but it did get under way immediately upon the publication of “*The Origin of Species*,” while previous suggestions of the same sort left the waters unruffled. Obviously the reason was that Darwin gave it body and substance, made it comprehensible from many points of view, armed his idea, in a word, with weapons to batter down the walls of habit and preconception that stood in its way. A novel conception or “intuition” may without prejudice to its novelty or its depth be made much less difficult if it touches life at many points, if, like the “*Divine Comedy*” it crowns a vast range of human experience and catches light from many sources of illumination.

The apprehension of any work of art, involving as it does at least partial reinstatement of the artist’s experience, is necessarily partial, and the apprehension is likely to fall short in proportion as the work belongs to the highest ranges of art. But what we have just seen to be true of the very greatest art disposes of the belief, which has many adherents, that such art can appeal to none but the most gifted observer. None but he, it is true, can find in it all that the artist put there, but the artist has put there so much that many can find something to take to heart and enjoy. It is for this reason that no art which has an essentially limited appeal can rank with the very greatest, that Walter Pater and Baudelaire, for example, are not artists of the first rank. Their preoccupations are esoteric and take account of things in an exceedingly limited aspect, the objects with which they present us are not sufficiently free from the idiosyncracies of their creators, are not shown sufficiently in perspective, not woven into an experience sufficiently extensive to make

them entirely real. They omit too much, their expressiveness expresses an experience too limited, it fails to give voice to many of the major interests of life. The art of both is difficult; but it is not for that reason greater than the art, in many ways much less difficult, of Balzac or Maupassant.

We have omitted from consideration the question of craftsmanship. This omission, though intentional, necessarily introduces a qualification into all the preceding judgments, which must now be explicitly recognized. The reason that it has not been discussed is that already stated, that capacity to use a given medium varies in some degree independently of what the artist has to express. Dreiser, for example, is assuredly not inferior to Booth Tarkington as an artist, though he uses words less skilfully. The power of apprehending and making use of a given material, to repeat once more, is one which there is at present no way of explaining, but none the less it does enter, sometimes decisively, into the value of a work of art as a whole. Where there is technical mastery of a medium, even the constructions of phantasy-builders have a measure of value, and the highest ranges of art are inaccessible if it is seriously defective. But it is something that must be felt, and to him who cannot feel it it cannot be shown.

CHAPTER VII

ART AND MORALITY

SECTION I.—THE MEANING OF MORALITY

WE are confronted at the start of this discussion by a difficulty in the use or uses of the term "morality." Like all terms which have both a technical and a popular significance, "morality" means a number of things, in large measure inconsistent with one another. In order to fix the sense in which it will be used here, we are obliged to notice briefly some of the meanings which seem inadequate or irrelevant to our purposes. Of these probably the chief is that which makes moral goodness identical with observance of a code of particular injunctions and prohibitions. All societies regard some acts as good, some as bad; and duty is conceived to consist in performing a recognized set of good acts, and in avoiding another recognized set of vices and crimes. Law and custom are what fix morals in this view, though it is true that by those who hold the view the source of morality is rarely thought to be law or custom: its alleged source is Conscience, or the Will of God, or perhaps the Law of Nature. Since these oracles, when their utterance at different times and in different places are compared, vary very widely, but always speak in accordance with current conventions, the supposition is scarcely hazardous that they are in the main names for the consensus of contemporaneous opinion. The individual thinks some things permissible because they are permitted him, other things reprehensible

because they are forbidden him, and for everyone ordinarily, and for nearly everyone always, the code is binding and final.

This view of morality may be termed the legalistic; another, also very widely held, the humanitarian or philanthropic. According to it, morality means self-sacrifice. Something more than avoidance of evil-doing is exacted by the humanitarian ethics. We must not only discharge our obligations to others, but also seek directly to benefit them, even at the expense of our own welfare. What is typically moral, according to this view, does not appear until something more is done than the law required, and the good man *par excellence* is the martyr, the man who lays down his life for others. This is often regarded as essentially the Christian view, and with justice, if the life of Jesus is taken as setting a pattern for all to follow.

It is neither possible nor necessary to debate the validity or finality of either of these views. It suffices to point out that neither is sufficiently general to cover an exceedingly important part of our lives, namely, the rational judgment and ordering of all our interests and activities. At the same time, both the views in question are sufficiently akin in purpose to such judgment and ordering to justify the use of the term "morality" as a designation for it. We are constantly confronted with situations such as the following. A choice of goods is offered us; the choice, however, involves the sacrifice of something which we feel to be valuable. One we can have, but not both, and if we are to choose otherwise than at random we must be in possession of some scale of values, some means of distinguishing between the less and the greater value. The study of morality, or ethics, is an attempt to discover such a scale of values, and to formulate it in terms which shall be both as general or far-reaching, and as concrete, as applicable to particular situations, as possible.

Such a conception, though certainly not identical with the

others mentioned, clearly covers a part of their content. A rationally-ordered life, as we have just seen, necessarily involves self-denial, since desires conflict, and to give any one of them the right of way is to condemn the others to at least partial frustration. Since, furthermore, we cannot ourselves explore the consequences of each and every act that may at any moment seem desirable, we have ordinarily no choice but to heed the warning of society against certain recognized "crimes" and "vices." Finally, since we are social beings and a life without attachments and loyalties is an unsatisfactory life, the humanitarian view, in warning us against indifference to the welfare of others, warns us against indifference to what is our own welfare also.

More positively, we may say that morality consists in realizing the maximum of good for the individual and for society through the adequate exercise of human powers. These powers are, originally, natural impulses. Impulses, however, conflict, and none of them knows, until taught by experience and example, the form of expression which will most fully satisfy it. Pugnacity, *e. g.*, begins as physical domination of the persons in the environment. But the thug and the prize-fighter exercise, as life becomes complex, a very limited and illusory sort of power. Machines, and the economic organization of society, transform the nature of real power. A capitalist may make his will prevail to an extent undreamed of by a rough-and-tumble fighter. Power over opinion and aspiration, though the least obvious, probably is in the long run the greatest of all, as witness Rousseau in comparison with Napoleon. Moral progress, and that deliberately guided progress called education, may in accordance with this view be defined as the process of giving to instincts a direction and organization such that separate interests, instead of warring with one another, will harmonize and so far as possible reinforce one another.

SECTION II.—MORALITY AND ART IN LIFE

We may begin the discussion of how morality, so understood, is related to art by asking the following question. Is or is not the aesthetic grasp or vision of things an ethical vision also, is it not or is it possible to have a combination of the utmost in aesthetic value with grave moral viciousness? We shall first consider the question with reference to the element of art in actual living, and then with reference to fine art.

The art of life is truly art only so far as it is fully integrated or moral, and *vice versa*. An activity of which the end is continuously realized throughout the whole course of action, is clearly one in which due regard is given to all the aspects of a situation, to all the interests involved. Otherwise some of the steps to be taken would be merely so much drag and drudgery. Where everything is done willingly, essential justice is done to every circumstance: none is omitted and none seen out of proportion. In conduct, at any rate, perfect art and perfect morality coincide. An immoral act is also an aesthetically inappropriate act. All the instances given in Chapter III of activities which were aesthetic as well as personal and practical are instances of morality no less than of art. Indeed, the difficulty in that context was that no distinction between the two seemed to appear. There is such a distinction, however, and an illustration will enable us to see in more detail both the common qualities of morality and art, and their point of divergence.

Let us revert to our instance of the scholar who is also a teacher. Success in research, we found, might be helped and not hindered by teaching, but only if the teacher succeeds in understanding the persons taught, awakening their interest, and so making them, in however slight a degree, co-workers in the process of investigation. This is what the

teacher's own interests call for, and it is precisely what his obligations to his students calls for. If he falls short of the ideal for himself, he falls short in precisely the same degree, of discharging his obligations to them. He may be as conscientious as possible, but if his heart is not in his work, if he does it from a sense of duty, it will be comparatively perfunctory, abstract, and dull. In so far as the teacher profits by his teaching, his students profit by it also, and in so far as they fail to profit, their loss is his loss too: he fails to gain what they have to give him.

The case as we have given it is an ideal case, and although actual cases approach more or less closely to the ideal, they never reach it. In the way in which such necessary fallings-short are treated, we find the key to the distinction between aesthetics and ethics. Aesthetics starts with spontaneity and aims at delight, morality with rights and duties and aims at the discharge of obligations. We may grant that a perfect individual in a perfect world would desire only to do what was for the welfare of other individuals: that art and morals would be completely one. But imperfect individuals, in an imperfect world, often desire to do what is contrary to their fellows' interest, and the ways of art and the ways of morals do, as things are, diverge. Popular suspicion of the complete morality of anyone who is not only primarily but also entirely an artist is to that extent justified.

Our hypothetical teacher may find that he can do his own work better if he shirks his duties to his pupils, if he cuts his classes, marks his papers carelessly, and buries himself in his own concerns. Hence morality demands that even at the cost of self-denial he do for them what is "nominated in the bond." We may generalize and say that society demands of an individual discharge of duties, the personal value of which cannot necessarily be made apparent to him.

If money is owed us, we cannot afford to wait for our debtor to feel the force of our wants so strongly that he would rather pay than spend the money on himself. Even if we are willing to forego the discharge of his obligations, we feel entitled to insist that the decision shall rest with us, that our consent and not the debtor's wishes shall determine the matter.

None the less, even in imperfect art and morality, there is a considerable common area. That there is more in conduct, judged as good and bad, than conduciveness to the weal or woe of the persons affected, is the point of the following passage from James's essay, "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life."

"A vast number of our moral perceptions are of this secondary kind. They deal with directly felt fitnesses between things, and often fly in the teeth of all the prepossessions of habit and presumptions of utility. The moment you get beyond the coarser and more common-place moral maxims, the Decalogues and Poor Richard's Almanac, you fall into schemes and positions which to the eye of common-sense are fantastic and overstrained. The feeling of the inward dignity of certain spiritual attitudes, as peace, serenity, simplicity, veracity; and of the essential vulgarity of others, as querulousness, anxiety, egotistic fussiness, etc.,—are quite inexplicable except by a preference of the more ideal attitude for its own pure sake. The nobler thing *tastes* better, and that is all that we can say. 'Experience' of consequences may truly teach us what things are *wicked*, but what have consequences to do with what is *mean* and *vulgar*? All the subtilities of the moral sensibility go as much beyond what can be ciphered out from the 'laws of association' " [remembered connection between acts and accruing pleasures and pains] "as the delicacies of sentiment possible between a pair of lovers go beyond such precepts of the 'etiquette to be observed during engagement,' as are printed in manuals of social form."

It will scarcely be contested that what James calls the "subtilities of the moral sensibility" are aesthetic in character, or perhaps it would be better to say that what passes for moral contains, in instances as these, a considerable aesthetic element. "Dignity," *e. g.*, seems to refer much more to the value of an attitude or disposition as immediately felt or observed, than to the goodness of the objective results that flow from it. Many actions, the consequences of which are trivial, are more objectionable, in the sense in question, than others of grave practical import. A swindler seems more contemptible than a highwayman, and a card-sharp than a bank-robber, and this quite apart from the amount of damage done their respective victims. Rashness is probably fraught with consequences as deplorable as those of cowardice, but the overhasty are not looked upon as are the pusillanimous. In a word, there are heroic crimes and despicable crimes, and it is difficult to find grounds specifically ethical for the difference in our feelings toward the two.

SECTION III.—MORALITY AND FINE ART

So far as the fine arts are concerned, it is scarcely possible to raise the question of morality except with reference to literature. The plastic arts, music, and architecture deal with a realm so remote from that of morality that moral issues are without relevance to them. It is doubtless true that a nude may serve as the starting-point of erotic reveries, but that is because it may be looked at, not as a work of art, a composition of line and color, but as a substitute for an actual object. Its value as a painting, however, or as a part of human experience, is as little to be impugned because it lends itself to misuse, as is the value or truth of chemistry because murders are committed with poisons or explosives. In the case of literature the matter seems other-

wise. A drama or a novel shows persons acting and experiencing the consequences of their action, and the nature of the consequences attributed to an act does in a measure constitute a judgment of the act. If a writer makes generosity the prelude to ignominy, honor to ridicule, and cowardice to peace of mind, the criticism may be made by those not ordinarily inclined to be strait-laced that the offense against morals is fatal to aesthetic effect. Such criticism is difficult to dismiss off-hand. On the other hand, such a view seems to expose the artist to censorship at the hands of those not artists, and if pushed to the limit to result in such judgments as Tolstoy's, by which much the larger part of all art is condemned on grounds which only a fanatic can hold to be relevant.

To find a solution to the difficulty we must go back to the ambiguity already pointed out in the conception of morality. If we accept the view that moral goodness consists in avoiding any infraction of a conventional code of conduct, there is no solution. The view in question always assumes that a particular act can be judged as good or bad in isolation, apart, that is to say, from the total situation in which it is performed. Its moral quality is something fixed independently of the personality of the person acting and the total situation in which he is placed, and any work in which such an act is depicted must either show it as objectionable or sin against morality. The conflict between art and morality is insoluble, to put the matter in other words, because the rightness or wrongness of the act can be judged by anyone; more particularly, even by one who has not seen it in the particular light thrown upon it by the artist's treatment, the individual context of persons and things in which he sets it.

In the view of morality here taken, on the other hand, the contradiction vanishes. A moral act is one which, in any

particular situation, best promotes the interests of all concerned. No two situations are absolutely the same, however, and no act, in consequence, can be judged out of its own unique setting. It is true, of course, that situations do resemble each other very closely, and that therefore the generalizations as to the goodness or badness of types of conduct, which are what codes of morals really set forth, have a high degree of probable truth. The consequences of mendacity, theft, and murder are doubtless almost always disastrous; in any particular case there is a strong presumption that they will be such; but we cannot be sure, except in so far as we can reconstruct in our own minds the concrete situation in which such an act is performed, whether or not it is really immoral.

Precisely such a reconstruction of a situation, both of the objective facts and of the way in which they affect all persons concerned, is what the novelist or dramatist seeks to give us. If he is successful in making the situation real and breathing life into the characters, then the criterion for judging every element involved, both aesthetically and morally, is given in the situation itself. This is true both in life and in art, but in life we are ourselves the artist, trying to feel imaginatively the situation as a whole, and in so far as we are bad artists, *i. e.*, imaginatively deficient, both our personal conduct and our moral judgment suffer. Just as little can the artist do without the moralist, since the validity of his effects depends upon the moral judgment passed upon all the persons involved. Moral and aesthetic criticism are not independent; but their co-implication does not give rise to conflict because neither can be complete without the other.

Some illustration is required to give concreteness to this statement. In what sense do the aesthetic effects attempted by a writer depend upon a moral judgment? To answer this question, we may again consider the instance of the

tragedy intended in "Othello." Shakespeare, as we have already seen, meant Othello to be a tragic and not a pathetic figure. The deception practiced upon him was successful, but it was successful because he was of too noble a mind to conceive as possible an intrigue so contemptible as Iago's. Having been misled, he took the only course possible to a great man, a man acutely sensitive to the requirements of honor. It is the assumption of his essential rightness in *this* respect that makes the play, in the full sense of the word, a tragedy, and this is the same thing as saying that we cannot share Shakespeare's feeling about the aesthetic quality of the situation unless we share also the moral judgment he passes upon what he shows us as taking place. If the slaughter of an unfaithful wife is an expression, not of nobility of mind, but of a revengeful possessiveness intent on holding property-rights in another person, or of the vanity which makes of a slight a mortal offense, Shakespeare's aesthetic intention misses fire, and his effect is at best one of pathos. So judged, and the judgment is moral, Othello is to be considered in the category of Père Goriot, as the victim, pathetic, doubtless, but none the less unheroic, of a delusion, of a fundamental weakness. In Kipling's story, "The Return of Imray," an Indian servant, honest and otherwise devoted, murders his master, who, he thinks, has bewitched a child of his; he is found out, and rather than suffer the ignominy of legal punishment he has himself bitten by a poisonous snake. He also is a pathetic figure, and one who does his duty of revenge and self-destruction as he sees it; but the fact that he is victimized by an illusion makes him less than tragic. If the fact is more apparent in this instance than in the other, it is because the superstition of the evil eye is more remote from us than is the superstition of marital proprietorship.

Similarly, comic effect depends upon a moral judgment—

in this instance, a judgment of stupidity. Judgments of stupidity are not, it is true, ordinarily considered to have anything to do with morality; but that is because we are in the habit of considering morality legalistically, and stupidity cannot be made punishable by law. In "The Egoist" the laceration of Sir Willoughby Patterne's pride is matter for smiles and not for tears because his self-esteem is stupid, it is mere vanity. The disillusionment of a man about himself may be pathetic; it may even be tragic, since it is a part of greatness to risk much on the assumption that a difficult situation will not find us lacking; but when the estimate we put upon ourselves is judged—and the judgment, again, is a moral judgment—egregious and offensive, the event of our undoing seems ludicrous, and this is an aesthetic judgment.

We have already indicated the way in which aesthetic insight is essential to moral. To judge an act to be moral is to judge that it best promotes the interests of all the individuals in a situation, that its total outcome is that which most completely meets the wishes of all concerned. The wishes of all concerned, however, are only to be grasped in proportion as we are able to enter into their feelings and purpose, to have, in Croce's terminology, an intuition of their individual frame of mind. So to understand them, to apprehend them as independent existences and not merely as probably sources of effects advantageous or disadvantageous to ourselves, is to possess an artist's vision of them. Until we can do this, our estimate of their actions is moral guess-work. Has a man acted dishonorably in suppressing a part of his opinions, or in saying something which he knows will be taken by his hearer in a sense other than that in which he means it? We cannot say until we have seen the situation as he sees it, understood the obligations resting upon him as he understands them. To do so we need the artist's imagination and his power of detachment. We cannot, to

repeat, either act morally ourselves or judge with justice the actions of others, unless we can do what it is essentially the artist's business to do, recreate their minds out of the substance of our own.

Not only is such imaginative grasp of others' experience essential to moral activity, it is also enormously facilitated by the understanding of works of art in the narrow sense. The number of human beings with whom we can come into personal contact, the purposes and aspirations into which we can learn to enter by direct experience, are exceedingly limited. Without the vicarious living to which art gives us the passport, our understanding of our fellows' lives would be even duller and more shallow than it is. This is true not only of our contemporaries, it is true many times more of man as he has lived in the past. The past dwells in our midst in a thousand ways; but if we knew nothing of the painting, the sculpture, the architecture, and the poetry of Greece, of the Middle Ages, or of the Renaissance, we should be blind to the significance that today these civilizations have for us. Again, we may expect to meet the objection that our understanding of these forces may be cultural but is not moral; but as before the objection springs from the familiar and unjustifiable limitation of "moral" to "legal." If we are to live as worthy a moral life as is possible for us, and give to our activities the widest scope that our conditions permit, we can afford to neglect no clue to any possible way in which human nature may flower into goodness and beauty.

If we so conceive the relation of morals and art, it is evident that art has nothing to fear from the relationship. Judgment of the artist by anyone not an artist would obviously be an intolerable hardship; but the artist is not the loser in an exchange by which, surrendering isolation and irresponsibility, he gains a voice in the determination of all

questions of good and evil, and a share in every human accomplishment.

Even here, however, we are haunted by the distinction between morality and art already noted. However true it may be that the total reading of life which finds expression in a work of art—and this is only another name for its moral quality—is not irrelevant to its aesthetic value; it is also true that a false reading of life may be more vividly realized, more adequately expressed than a truer reading, and in that sense may have more aesthetic value. We may agree with Bosanquet when he commends as the utterance of a manly and generous reading of things the verse:

“Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stone:
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in one's own.”

We may also agree with Mr. Chesterton when he says that the most stupid line in literature is Swinburne's about “the lilies and languor of virtue, the roses and rapture of vice.” But we can hardly doubt that the latter is better as poetry. When the contrast is less striking, however, we may fall into the confusion of thinking that what we agree with in point of fact is also better as art than what we disagree with. The reason is that we eke out from the resources of our own experience the expression of what seems to us to be true. We read into such words more than they really express. In the example just taken, the words conveying what we are considering to be the truer idea are little more than counters, they designate an idea rather than express it. But if words in themselves inexpressive arouse reverberations in our mind, we are likely to attribute what we feel to what excites it, in the same way that we usually find commendation

of ourselves, expressed in phrases however commonplace, eloquent and beautiful.

It thus remains true that only in an ever-unattainable ideal do beauty and morality become wholly the same. But what cannot be attained may be approached, and as intelligence increases, more and more of the ideal becomes a reality.

CHAPTER VIII

ART AND RELIGION

SECTION I.—THE MEANING OF RELIGION

THE thesis which we shall attempt to make in this chapter is that art and religion are branches from a single stem, and that they prosper best when each of them draws sustenance from the other. We shall attempt first to define religion in its general and fundamental character, and then indicate the various forms which it may take. Each of these forms, as we shall see, naturally manifests itself in expressions which are aesthetic in character, and when such manifestations are denied it grows feeble and perfunctory. Art, conversely, contains in all its forms something akin to religion, something mystical, and when this withers art falls into dilettantism, academicism, preciousness, or triviality. At the same time, art and religion are distinguishable: religion is practical as well as contemplative, and if it becomes merely contemplative it suffers a loss of integrity and becomes a form of sentimentalism.

Before arguing this thesis, we must attempt a definition of religion. It is scarcely necessary to say that any definition possible within the limits of the present discussion must incur the reproach of dogmatism. No question is more variously answered than that of the essential nature of religion, and we cannot hope even to notice any but one of the answers that have been given to it. We shall ignore all theological problems and so far as possible all which have a philosophical bearing, and consider religion merely as a

particular exercise of human powers, a type of experience which may be identified without recourse to any opinions about the constitution of the world or the origin or destiny of man.

What, the question is, is the psychological character essential to religion? We shall assume that any devotion to a person, organization, purpose, or cause, which is felt to be larger, more important than, and yet inclusive of, the individual, is in psychological essence religion. In so far as our lot, for weal or woe, is identified in body and spirit with what is beyond us and what at the same time allows us participation in its cause and in its triumph, we have a religion. The object of religious emotion, to say the same thing in other words, is what absorbs and possesses us, and what at the same time we possess. The radically irreligious man is he who, whatever his professed beliefs, is at heart self-centered and self-satisfied, who feels no allegiance to, no union with, any larger life than his own.

The decay of supernatural theological belief in the last two or three generations has probably left religion, so understood, substantially untouched. Romantic love, patriotism, devotion to science or to art, all of these may be, to him who feels that his personal life centres about any one of them and is nothing except as supporting that allegiance, religions. It is not to Jehovah or to Jesus only that we may say "Thou has made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless, until they find ^{rest} ~~life~~ in thee." Nationalism, probably, is the religion most in vogue at present. It is for the nation, more than for anything else, that men seem willing to shed blood and to put their own in the way of being shed; it is that which they will die for rather than betray.

"If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England."

"Who dies, if England lives?" "We are a moment of eternal France." These, like the solemn, almost the mystic, exaltation of Sibelius's "Finlandia" music, are the authentic notes of religious sentiment. So also, in a very different vein, is the rapturous, the ecstatic self-assertion in self-surrender, the triumphant affirmation of life in death, with which "Tristan und Isolde" comes to an end. Whatever may be thought on other grounds of either patriotic or erotic mysticism, it is impossible to doubt that both are, psychologically considered, genuinely religious in character.

With the word "mysticism" the clue to the most essential and significant aspect of religion is reached. Religion, to repeat, is the sense of union with something other than one's self. But no such union can ever be proved, or exhibited to the senses. The actual *sense* of it is what mysticism provides, a sense which appears to the mystic to be no illusory feeling, but one which carries conviction, which seems to testify to the existence of some objective fact. What is testified to is the expansion of the self, a dissolution of the boundaries which ordinarily separate us from the world and the living beings about us. We become one with what was previously felt as other, as indifferent if not hostile.

The oneness so felt is not, of course, something which can be made apparent to others, or even, entirely, to ourselves in our non-mystical moments. This is why James calls mystical states "ineffable." To the eye of the unsympathetic beholder the mystic appears as one drunk. "No one can make clear to one who has never had a certain feeling, in what the quality or worth of it consists. One must have musical ears to know the value of a symphony; one must have been in love one's self to understand a lover's state of mind. Lacking the heart or the ear, we cannot interpret the musician or lover justly, and are even likely to consider

them weak-minded or absurd. The mystic finds that most of us accord to his experiences an equally incompetent treatment."

The nature and conditions of the mystical or religious experience may perhaps best be shown by some account of their opposite. It is in religion that we find "salvation": an expression of little meaning unless we ask, salvation from what? From isolation, the answer is, from solitude in an alien and uncomprehending world. A world in which there is nothing, human or non-human, to meet, answer and co-operate with our powers, to take cognisance of or respond to our feelings, is what on the whole we find most appalling. All our instincts look to help, of some sort, from our environment, even though the help be merely the stimulus afforded by hostility. Their propitious development requires at least the partial connivance of the things and persons around us. The child's cry of pain or hunger, which looks to parental solicitude for its efficacy, is only the most obvious instance of this. In our more mature years, when we no longer expect to have our wishes gratified as by a miracle, but take thought about means as well as about ends, we only make the miracle one step more remote. We offer inducements to others to do as we wish, but we should have no means of finding inducements if others were not in some way responsive to our acts. When either natural objects or human beings act in a way we do not understand, when they disappoint our expectations, we are frustrated and at a loss, and the sense of ourselves as limited, impotent, and alone, is brought home to us with painful force.

Pessimism, either as a mood or as a general conviction, is essentially awareness of such isolation as underlying or framing in each or every particular experience. Life passes from the major to the minor key as the awareness in question becomes dominant, gives characteristic tone or quality to

the frame of mind in which we meet the situation. In whatever degree it is present, in that degree there is a strain or undercurrent of melancholy in our thoughts; joy in any achievement arises not merely from the particular conquest made, but also and perhaps even more from the presumption of responsiveness to our will, in things in general, which *this* responsiveness establishes. But the sum total of mastery over things, of achieved union with the world outside, which any one of us can win by his personal efforts is small indeed, and the experience of mysticism is a sense or affirmation that the accord achieved is an example or promise or guarantee of more general harmony.

In this resides the difference between religion and morality. From the point of view of morals, our validity, our possession of what is good or valuable, is measured by what we have actually done or can do; what is ineffectual in us, what is groping or helpless, is nothing. The will is judged by the deed, and we have not title to anything not so secured. Only in religion can it be said, "Here is ease that asks not earning." In religion, of whatever type, we have an assurance of something in which we may find comfort, though we have not ourselves created and cannot claim credit for the ground of our comfort. There is no religion without an object which gives us a standing, a significance, in reality, and there is none in which this standing is not in part unearned, a gift of the gods. The larger life in which our own is taken up, in which our weakness and inarticulateness receive recognition along with our strength and expressiveness, is something which we could never have made ourselves, and the credit for which is not ours. Unless we possess more than our own handiwork we possess nothing; even our own handiwork is as much the work of the forces that coöperated with us as it is of our individual efforts. The man in love did not create the object of his devotion, nor

the patriot his country. Unless these things are possessed mystically, they remain forever elusive.

Although there are religions which have as object some part of the world only—those, for example, of which we have already spoken—no such religion is stable or ultimately satisfying. Until we have come to some sort of terms with the whole frame of things, the terms we may make with any fragment of them are likely to be altered at a moment's notice. Love for an individual or a group of individuals is a mere ebullition of feeling, which overflows today and is dispersed tomorrow, unless the individual or group of individuals are felt to be the embodiment of some universal and permanent value. They either have no significance, or they derive it from something outside themselves, from some universal quality of preciousness which they enshrine. Just as no intellectual judgment can permanently be maintained which does not draw confirmation from the whole fabric of our knowledge, so no interest can preserve its full vitality unless it is supported by our whole world of values.

We are so accustomed to think of religions as exemplified by Christianity, with its assurance of a personal God and a future life of happiness, that a view of the world scarcely seems religious that does not assert that "God's in his heaven, all's well with the world." But we may face the world less exuberantly than this, and still find peace. What is called pessimism may be religious if it find in things the means whereby we may be sustained and fortified in our possession of whatever values that are left amidst the wreckage. The world is felt to be not wholly vicious if it has yielded to us the secret of its viciousness, and enabled us to liberate our desires from what inevitably disappoints them. So much at least of religious quality is to be found in such expressions of pessimism as nearly everything of Hardy's,

or the poetry of James Thomson and Mr. A. E. Housman. When Mr. Housman writes:

“High heaven and earth ail from the prime foundation,
All thoughts to rive the heart are here, and all are vain.”

at least the thought that the truth may be known is not vain, nor does it rive the heart. And “whatever brute and black-guard made the world,” to quote Mr. Housman again, also made expression possible for a poet.

SECTION II.—THE COMMUNITY BETWEEN RELIGION AND ART

After this long introduction we are at last able to return to our proper concern. The state of mystic exaltation or insight, of living union with something not ourselves, is fleeting and elusive. Its assurance cannot be verified at any given moment, as can the propositions of science. When its illumination and warmth are past, what was illuminated may fade out of our minds and leave them blank and cold. But art, though it does not to be sure alter the substance of things, does show in them this much of responsiveness to our wills, that they can be made to take on an appearance congenial to us, and expressive of what we would have them be. Art as a whole represents one sort of triumph over indifferent matter, which by it has been shown to be capable of a form nearer to the heart's desire than its native form. “The substance of things hoped for,” thanks to art, is not wholly a matter of faith. In that some part of the whole of things has had its soul extracted and made visible, we have ground for a measure of confidence that ultimate rationality in the world may be more than a vain dream.

We have already spoken of the service of art in making

emotion of any sort a permanent possession of the race by expressing it in a form that is not abolished by the passage of time. This is preëminently true of religious emotion. The ritual of the conventional or established religions, unless of course we take seriously its claim to miraculous efficacy, is to be regarded as symbolic and so of the nature of art; it owes its value to its expressiveness and not to its effectiveness. But this is a comparatively trivial sort of expressiveness. Whoever worships, desires to envisage the object of his worship in the form most fitting and adequate to it, to dwell upon and saturate his mind with the image of his God—whatever God it may be. Indeed, it is a question whether the intensity of feeling, the freeing of the mind from everything irrelevant, which is essential to the greatest art, is possible except when the feeling expressed is religious in character. The artist is inspired to do his utmost only if he feels that what he is showing is that which is best worth showing. If this is true, if the greatest art is always religious art, secular art of the first rank is only the art of a religion that has not yet found recognition and a name.

This principle may be applied to such partial religions as patriotism and love, as well as to religion in the full sense, the attitude of the individual to the totality of things. When patriotism and love are not mere episodes in life, but master passions to which all other interests are made subsidiary, each tends to dwell upon its object, to brood over it, to give it an independent and many-sided existence. From this brooding contemplation there may or may not spring actual works of art; but the attitude is that of the artist, and certainly it is powerfully reinforced by the enjoyment of works of art. Of course there may be the exceedingly unimaginative patriot or lover, who expresses himself chiefly or entirely in action. And yet if a man is bored by his country's landscape, indifferent to its literature, contemp-

tuous of its music and architecture, and hostile to all expressions of its national tradition, it is difficult not to regard his patriotism, if he professes any, as mere self-assertion or brute pugnacity.

The same is true of religion in its completely developed form. The time when Christianity was a moving force in the world was the Middle Ages above all others, and this was the time of Dante and the cathedrals. Protestantism enjoyed its day of vitality in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and flowered in Milton. The movement of which the French Revolution and Romanticism were part was religious as well as political and literary, and along with it went Blake, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Goethe and Beethoven. Conversely, when loyalties are weak and convictions half-hearted, imagination flags also, and art becomes second-rate.

Even second-rate art, however, has some element of mysticism. In mysticism, to repeat, we are aware of something vivid, intense, living, which is not ourselves and yet into which we can enter; and this is what art, if it is successful at all, does give us. We have already seen that in art the vision we have of things about us loses the colorless and emaciated character it has when we are busy with practical concerns, and becomes richer and more varied. We get a sense of it as an independent reality; and yet not independent, since we can enter into it, feel ourselves expanded by it. If the part of ourselves that can enter into it is a small part, then we feel it to be art of less than the first magnitude, but the mystical element is there if the art is genuine.

In the case of plastic art, what has been said of the relation of art and religion may be misinterpreted to the effect that the greatest art is to be found, *e. g.*, in pictures of the Madonna, the Holy Family, and the like. But such a supposition can only spring from an utter misconception of the

purpose of the plastic arts. The mysticism which painting embodies is that in which the visible form and color of things take on life, and become something independent; something independent, and at the same time sufficiently akin to us to invite us to live in them. In a Giorgione, a Rembrandt, a Renoir or a Cézanne, color and space and solidity become animated by a spirit of their own, in which we can live, and live without personifying them or weaving fancies about them in which they play a quasi-human part. So also can the sea live, or the stars, and without becoming Poseidon or Phoebus or Orion. It is true that they rarely do so; it is true also that few of us take any real interest in plastic art; but these are not two facts, but the same fact. But while only the greatest painters or sculptors can show us this pervasive livingness of color and form, whoever can lend to the object he puts on canvas a realized individual existence, which lures us out of ourselves into itself, is providing us with an experience typically mystical.

SECTION III.—THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN RELIGION AND ART

The difference between religion and art remains to be pointed out. What art gives is, in so far as art is something other than religion, semblance and not reality.

Welch Schauspiel! aber, ach! ein Schauspiel nur!
Wo fass' ich dich, unendliche Natur?
Euch, Brüste, wo?

Doubtless there is a sense in which we may be said to possess a thing in understanding it, but there is another sense in which we do not thereby possess it at all. Few Englishmen, doubtless, knew so well or appreciated so rapturously their country as did Henry James. Nevertheless, there was

in his appreciation the touch of wistfulness that bespoke the foreigner, who knows that he is not to the manner born. But for this, his final gesture, of transferring his citizenship to England, would have been without meaning. Love without appreciation may be nothing, but love that is only appreciation is little more. It is true that our friends are those who are interested in appreciating us, knowing us for what we are; but it is also true that they are those to whom we can turn in time of adversity. It is the religious epicure, the *religieux*, for whom religion is nothing but enjoyment.

The ground of the distinction between religion and art is as follows: Art is an imaginative understanding of something, and that something cannot be itself. Expression must have something to express, it cannot express itself. The painter must have something to show us other than skill with the brush. He must have seen something, or at least have conceived of something, worth seeing. The writer must have some conviction, or some sense of a poignancy, an absurdity, a noteworthiness, in real things; otherwise he is merely a practitioner of rhetoric or persiflage. Even in such plastic art as is meant to be non-representative, there is a pattern, a design, a sense of depth or order, and they are moving because they give us some of the qualities of the real world, as it were in solution. Art, as we have seen, has mystical elements, and the sense of the ineffable and incommunicable which is characteristic of mysticism clings to it. But mysticism is felt to be awareness of something, however indefinite. A particular mystical experience may be illusory, as may any non-mystical belief. But it intends to grasp or lay hold of something other than itself, and if we impugn this quality wholesale, we are reading mysticism out of life. When the painter says that he is indifferent to subject-matter, he means that the things that interest him, color and form, are embodied in all particular things, and

that it is a matter of indifference in what embodiment he shows them.

Just as morality which is for its own sake and not for some objective good, becomes self-righteousness, a kind of arrogant egotism, and love which is love of love and not of another individual, degenerates into sentimentalism, so "art for art's sake" is the creed of an anaemic aestheticism. The artist, it is true, is he who loves beauty. But beauty is an abstraction. We never come upon anything which is simply "beauty;" all that exists or can exist is something beautiful. This something beautiful is in a sense the creation of the artist, in that it owes its existence as a work of art to his agency, but it is always something rooted in reality, some part of the real world shorn of the accidents and excrescences which mar its perfect significance.

If we try to capture beauty which is beauty and nothing else we are on the road to the ivory tower. As he who says "All for love and the world well lost" is in the way of losing the world and love too, so in the ivory tower art is likely to vanish along with everything else. The atmosphere of hushed twilight, of sighing wistfulness, which we find in much of Walter Pater's writings, seems to be due at least partly to the extreme singleness of his eye for aesthetic effect. In "Plato and Platonism," after describing the severity of the regimen at Sparta, the iron discipline to which the Spartans subjected themselves, he asks the reason for so harsh a pruning away of all the wayward impulses and casual pleasures of life. The answer, he says, is that the Spartans desired to appear in the eyes of Greece as a spectacle of perfect art. Mr. Paul Elmer More comments with justice on the flagrant absurdity of such an idea: it was the Spartans' purpose to be victorious in war, and if they achieved incidentally a kind of austere or statuesque beauty, such a result could have only been the remotest part of their inten-

tions. All Pater's historical estimates, as Mr. More points out, are infected by the same misapprehension. Plato and the early Christians are similarly credited with dominant aesthetic intent, although it would be impossible to find better examples of concern with practical and moral issues. We have the greatest art, the art of Homer, of Lucretius, of Dante, of Shakespeare, when the artist has sources of inspiration which are not limited to concern for perfect expression. To make art itself a religion is to choke or dry up those sources.

CHAPTER IX

THE CONFUSION OF VALUES

IN the foregoing we have attempted to make clear the nature of aesthetic value, and its relation to the values of simple instinctive desire, of religion, and of morality. In the present chapter we shall consider the confusions possible between aesthetic values and these others, confusions which experience shows to be only too prevalent. From the point of view of theory such a discussion is probably unnecessary. The principles by which the distinction is to be made between what is art and what is not art have already been laid down, and to point out in detail the departures from such principles which are to be observed, may seem as superfluous as to add a discussion of criminology to a book on ethics. From the practical point of view, however, the matter stands otherwise. If our contention has been justified that art has a rôle of dignity and importance to play in life, the consequence is inevitable that to confuse aesthetic value with non-aesthetic is a serious failure in the business of realizing whatever degree of goodness our endowment and circumstances make possible for us. Money is doubtless one of the goods of life, and so is marriage, but it does not follow that to marry for money necessarily provides both values. Similarly, achievement in science and the esteem of our fellows are both goods, but to seek to arrive at the scientific conclusions which will be most welcome to contemporary opinion is no sure method of gaining both or either of these goods.

The surest way of avoiding an error is to see how it comes to pass. If, for example, art and the life of naive impulse, though related, are distinguished in essential points, how is it possible to fall into the blunder of taking one for the other? The answer is that to experience a difference and to recognize the difference are by no means one and the same thing. Our experiences do not come to us labelled or hall-marked, their constituent elements are not clear-cut, and the complexity of all of them in adult life is so great that the identification of any one is exceedingly difficult. A sensation of color, for example, seems the simplest thing in the world to recognize correctly, and yet there is no doubt that long training is required before we can say exactly what any particular color is, or be sure of its precise difference from any other. Even such discrimination as the ordinary individual of today exercises is the outcome of a long historical process. The vocabulary of many savages is almost wholly lacking in names of colors, and a people so highly developed as the Greeks had only a fraction of our color vocabulary. As Professor Dewey says, to perceive exactly what a given hue and shade is, involves all the resources of scientific method, and far from being a natural gift, it is an achievement possible only at the highest stage of intellectual enlightenment.

If this is true of something comparatively so little nebulous as sensation, it is many times more true of feeling and desire. When it is said that there is something not wholly displeasing to us in the misfortunes of our best friends, what is meant might be otherwise expressed by the statement that in our attitude towards even those of whom we are fondest there is some admixture of hostility, the presence of which we may not have suspected until it is revealed by the pleasure of its gratification. We can never, in a word, know precisely what we want, nor whether our satisfactions are altogether what

we take them to be. So far as we know at all, it is by learning to associate a particular throb or shade of feeling with the consequences of which it is the forerunner; thus do we name and understand the promptings of desire which an object calls forth in us. All our states of mind become intelligible to us in this way and in no other, and our perception of what is going on in our more complex experiences is the fruit of a long and difficult observation of our own and of others' behavior.

For example. A responsible position in the world is likely to be a lucrative position, and he who holds it is often at a loss to tell whether he values it for the opportunity it gives him to exercise his powers, or for its financial return. Usually, of course, he values it for both; but the exact proportion, the exact extent to which his interest would languish if his salary were reduced, or if his activities were circumscribed, may be an insoluble problem. Again, unwillingness to dissent from some popular opinion may be due to a genuine belief that it is true; but he who shares it can hardly be totally oblivious to the persecution that falls to the lot of those who in important matters take issue with the majority. If in spite of this he thinks he knows certainly that the spectre of such persecution has had *absolutely* no part in determining his belief, he is dangerously close to self-deception.

This example brings us to a second factor in the confusion of values. The general difficulty just observed is enormously enhanced when the elements in a complex activity vary in the degree of their "respectability." The official opinion of society has always assigned different degrees of merit to human desires, and the scale of values so set is always in some degree assented to by every member of society. Our sense of solidarity with our fellows, the esteem in which we are held and consequently, as a rule, in which we hold ourselves, depends so essentially upon conformity, that to

acknowledge that we have been weighed in society's scales and found wanting is an almost intolerable hardship. The scales in which we are weighed may not be those of society as a whole, which we may esteem very lightly. But there is always some standard of value, perhaps that of a group, perhaps only that of our own individual self, in accordance with which we desire our acts and thoughts to be justified. We have, therefore, an exceedingly powerful and constantly operative incentive to disregard or slur over in our minds some part of what we wish, to think only of the more highly regarded of our desires. Invidious distinctions are the provocative of this sort of deception—self-deception as a rule, since only the adept in hypocrisy can or ordinarily desires to impose on others without first imposing on himself.

Illustrations are not difficult to find. Vindictiveness constantly masquerades as love of justice or intolerance of wrongdoing, envy as zeal for democracy and hatred of snobbishness, dislike of one's own poverty as enthusiasm for a better social order, and parochialism as patriotism. Conversely, uneasiness about one's own habits assumes the garb of moral broad-mindedness, desire for continued enjoyment of privilege appears as abhorrence of anarchy, and inability to dominate existing conditions as glorification of what is remote in time or space. He who thus mistakes his motives cannot, to repeat, be with justice accused of intent to mislead. Only with the help of patience and fortitude are we able to detect the meaning of our impulses and of their gratification, and there is no one who is not disposed to put the most favorable construction possible on all that he does. None the less, this disposition, by keeping us in ignorance of our wishes as they really are, prevents us from taking to heart the lessons of experience, as revealed either to ourselves or to others, and learning in what way we may find abiding satisfaction.

The danger of confusing values is, indeed, nothing other than the danger of day-dreaming. Day-dreaming, as we have seen, consists in mistaking an imaginary object, commended to us by untutored instinct or unreflective habit, for the real object with which experience presents us. This failure to read aright the condition as it exists commits us to a goal of endeavor possible or desirable under other conditions, but not that which is indicated or revealed by the present unique set of circumstances. To confuse myths with realities is to be set at cross-purposes with ourselves, it is to suppose that we are on the road to one place when we are really on the road to quite another. The expression "day-dreaming" calls attention to the misapprehension of actualities which this process involves; the expression "confusion of values," to the mistaking of the real purpose of our conduct which such misapprehension entails.

Parochialism, for example, which cloaks itself in the garb of militant patriotism takes the customs familiar to us for the indispensable conditions of human excellence everywhere. Because we find these customs satisfactory to ourselves, it demands that other peoples, though they live under other conditions and inherit a different tradition, should also find them satisfactory. Ostensibly, the reason is that our way of life is the fitting and moral way; actually, it is resentment of the unfamiliar and lust for domination. The process begins with inability to see the circumstances of alien human beings as they are; it ends not with the expected conversion and gratitude of its supposed beneficiaries, but with their resistance and embitterment. Day-dreaming and confusion of values are thus two phases of the same thing, and both alike are the prelude to futility.

Among the innumerable confusions between aesthetic and other values which are possible, one of the most important is that between the value of anything as a work of art and the

effectiveness of the technical means employed in its execution. This is the confusion most obviously characteristic of what is called, in a derogatory sense, the "academic" attitude towards art. It arises from the vastly greater ease of pigeon-holing anything than of judging it as an individual thing. In the chapter on Art and Morality we discussed the tendency to consider an act in isolation, as coming under some recognized category, and to consider such subsumption as a final determination of its worth. But to do so, to suppose that we have said all that is important about an act when we have pronounced it to involve deception, or to be a substitution of violence for persuasion, may be to miss altogether the clue to its individual moral quality. Just so in aesthetic judgment, to say that a particular composition is not a poem because it does not make the usual use of metre and rhyme, may be to lose sight utterly of its specific or characteristic value as an expression of truly imaginative feeling. If we make it the criterion of dramatic unity that a play should set forth a single action, occurring at one place in the course of a single day, we have a standard that can be applied without emotional or imaginative exertion. The process is one of subsumption, and so is purely intellectual, but in dispensing with all strain upon imaginative sensibility it dispenses also with all aesthetic character.

Again, if we say that a picture has unity of composition or design when the principal figures in it form a triangle, a device constantly employed by the painters of the Italian Renaissance, we have a criterion readily applicable, and justified to this extent, that that particular compositional grouping does provide one of the ways of securing unity of design. But the academic critic is likely to say more, to say that it is *the* way. Thereby he not only blinds himself to other means of unification, but he sees even the particular means he is setting up as a standard not in its true significance, but

as an isolated or mechanical device, something stripped of all significance for art. It is not the whole penalty of the academic critic that he is unable to recognize anything valuable that is new; perhaps he suffers even more in that he cannot really appreciate what there is in the very things of which he makes the standard for everything else—the masterpieces of the past.

To say this is by no means to deny all value to the work of the grammarian or the archaeologist. Living appreciation of any work of art, or of the spirit, aesthetic, moral, and religious, that suffuses everything belonging to a particular civilization or age, is in need of all the information it can get, from whatever quarter. If grist is brought to its mill by those who accumulate facts without feeling their significance, it is in the debt of such persons to that extent. But if it is true that to appreciate Dante we must know a great deal about the philosophy of Aristotle, the theology of Thomas Aquinas, and the social and political conditions of mediaeval Florence, it is also true that encyclopedic erudition in all these matters may leave anyone totally incompetent to discover the slightest merit in the “Divine Comedy.” And while it is also true that the more we know of the past the more we are ordinarily able to see in the present, it is again true that all the facts in the world about the past, simply as brute facts without any perceived significance, would leave their possessor as unable as any babe in arms to understand any present issue, or to forecast any future outcome of events.

What holds of the critic or connoisseur holds also of the artist. Unless he inherits a tradition, stands on the shoulders of those who have gone before, he can do nothing, and the more he has assimilated from others the greater the self-expression possible for him. But if he treats his predecessors as sources not of suggestions but of rules, he will have no self to express. Academicism, in other words, is a malady

which attacks artists as well as critics. The antiquarian has an inexpugnable value, but he loses it and becomes pestiferous the moment he forsakes his rôle of hewer of wood and drawer of water.

Unhappily, the historical and technical method of approach is that most often employed when formal instruction in art is given. Judgments about contemporary works of art, it is said, are contentious, and to pronounce upon them is to undergo the risk that posterity will reverse us. Only what has stood the test of time ought to be treated as exemplifying the standards of art, since only of such works can an objective judgment, certified by all critics, be pronounced. There is no doubt that by following this principle we can avoid more possibilities of error than by pronouncing upon contentious subjects. The "objectivity" so secured, however, is dearly bought if the price paid is dearth of living appreciation. This is true in all matters, and doubly so in art, in which judgment depends upon the response made by the entire psychological organism, and can never be objective in the degree of our judgments about the facts of physics or chemistry. The search for objectivity in aesthetic judgment, or rather for such "objectivity" as the historical method promises, readily becomes a pretext for shirking all individual judgment whatever. The results of such shirking are only too apparent in the timidity, masked as hostility, with which the merely historical student of art usually approaches what is new.

If the contention of this book is sound, that art can be understood only if human nature is understood, then the academic study of art, as it is ordinarily found, becomes doubly deplorable. To suppose that acquaintance with technical methods or with the history of art is the sole means of enlightenment when the actual problems of aesthetic appreciation are concerned, is to forget entirely that appreci-

ation is the work of a living being. This living being's interests, habits, prejudices, and unconscious assumptions all enter into the process of enjoyment. Appreciation should be intelligent; if it is not, it sinks to the level of mere thrills, crude or refined: it is day-dreaming. But intelligence involves self-consciousness, and this is impossible unless our attention has been called to the qualities of our human nature and to the prejudices and assumptions we all inherit in a society which is nothing if not fiercely prejudiced and dogmatic. Such prejudices and dogmas draw a veil between us and what we seek to enjoy: they make genuine experience impossible. To clear our mind of them, to be on our guard against the habits which shut us up in the prison of our own myth-making faculty, is therefore the necessary preliminary to getting a first-hand acquaintance with works of art.

The academician's study of art makes no provision for this understanding of the process of appreciation itself; and if pursued as the *only* approach to art, it rejects altogether the means by which self-consciousness is to be secured. The practical working of academicism may be illustrated by an instance taken from actual fact.

The teaching of art as usually carried on by colleges labors under the handicap that the works of art described and explained are not actually to be seen by the class, nor, except at rare intervals, by the teacher. It is obviously impossible for a college to have a collection of pictures by Giotto, Leonardo, Giorgione, Titian, Rubens, Velasquez, and the other great painters whose work calls for discussion. The prints, photographs, and verbal descriptions which are all that can be given as substitutes for the pictures themselves are of course utterly inadequate—as inadequate as would be Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare" if used in lieu of the plays themselves. It is therefore a matter of no little consequence that teachers and pupils alike should have access to the original work that they seek to understand.

Recently one of the American colleges applied for an opportunity to provide its students with first-hand acquaintance with a very large and representative collection of works of plastic art. The collection, in range and quality, was without parallel in America; its owner, however, considered that it could be fruitfully studied only by those possessing an intelligent conception of human nature and of aesthetic principles. Compliance with the request was therefore accompanied by the condition that the college should coöperate to provide such a background; the coöperation involved, on the college's part, no more than a statement of the instruction already given, a statement sufficiently detailed to make possible a plan for such supplementation as might seem necessary. The college itself was not asked to provide the additional instruction, which would have been furnished as a part of the collection's resources, nor was it asked to modify in any way its existing courses in art. Nevertheless, the information sought was refused, apparently on the ground that to give it would have involved an admission that the instruction already offered might not be all-sufficient. Thus are day-dreams sheltered from the destructive action of facts.

The incident is striking because of the extraordinary contrast in presents between profession and actual practice, between the intelligent open-mindedness which may reasonably be expected of an institution devoted to the advancement of learning and education, and the somnambulistic adherence to precedent actually displayed. But it is not unique. It is a symptom of the entrenchment of vested interest and unchangeable habits which are as destructive to art as they are to life in general.

Another and very frequent form of confusion is that into which anyone is likely to fall who attempts to interpret any one of the arts in accordance with prepossessions appro-

priate to another. Those who have been familiar with literature but are only beginning to make the acquaintance of painting are almost inevitably led to attach too much importance to the subject-matter of a picture, to expect it to tell a story, and to suppose that they have seen what the painter intended them to see when they have found a narrative or drama into which they can fit the scene depicted. In general, what most often bars the road to an appreciation of painting is the presumption that a painter is striving to embody emotions which are relevant to events or moral traits rather than to the visible aspect of things. William James relates an experience of his which amusingly illustrates the point.

"I remember seeing an English couple sit for more than an hour on a piercing February day in the Academy at Venice before the celebrated 'Assumption' by Titian; and when I, after being chased from room to room by the cold, concluded to get into the sunshine as fast as possible and let the pictures go, but before leaving drew reverently near to them to learn with what superior forms of susceptibility they might be endowed, all I overheard was the woman's voice murmuring: 'What a *deprecatory* expression her face wears! What self-abnegation! How *unworthy* she feels of the honor she is receiving!' Their honest hearts had been kept warm all the time by a glow of spurious sentiment that would have fairly made old Titian sick."*

Obvious and inexcusable as is the error involved in such confusions, its wide prevalence, even in quarters where a better understanding of plastic art might be expected, makes some further attention to it desirable. Books intended for the use of students of painting frequently give an extended account of what the pictures discussed represent, name the

* The Principles of Psychology. James, vol. ii, page 471.

persons who appear there if they are actual individuals, and in general discuss works of art as though they were historical documents. Of course they may be used as such, just as one might read "Henry VIII" to acquire information about the sort of life lived in the court of the Tudors, or an ethnologist might consult the works of Gauguin to discover what the natives of Tahiti really look like. To do this is to part company with art. This is not to say that the representative character of a picture is necessarily irrelevant to its value as a work of art. But it is true that only so much of what is represented is germane as can actually be shown, be made visible; what is merely inferred or imported from other spheres of experience, is beside the issue altogether. If we wish to judge a painting, let us say, of the Crucifixion, we are not essentially assisted by any information relating to the theological doctrine of the Atonement.

A similar confusion may be briefly noticed with reference to music. The learner in music is likely to suppose that there is some intellectual, narrative, or pictorial content about which he must be enlightened before he can understand the notes played, that he cannot get through his ears all that there is to be gotten. Here again, of course, instruction as to what to listen for may be useful in directing attention and removing misconceptions, and progress in appreciation will be made more rapid by some acquaintance with harmony and counterpoint, but the attempt to discover an ulterior significance in the music is simply a distraction or a perversion of the specifically musical interest. Whoever is unable to distinguish the prevailing quality of Beethoven's Third Symphony, or of Tchaikowsky's Sixth, without knowing the titles ordinarily given to those works, is probably misdirecting his energies in paying any attention whatever to music. Programme music may have musical value, just

as political propaganda may have literary value, but anyone who takes the programme seriously is more likely to miss than to discover the value that the music has. It is therefore to be regretted that the printed directions with which concert-goers are often supplied to guide their understanding of the music, ordinarily contain this programme, and even supply an improvised substitute with what was not intended as programme-music by the composer.

For the sake of completeness, we may refer to that vagary of patriotism, and vagary of art, which is constituted by nationalism in art. To buy an American picture because it is American, or a French picture because it is French, irrespective of its intrinsic value, is to sink to the level of the collector of stamps. To refuse to play Beethoven because we are at war with the people of whom he was one, is to confess to an equal ignorance of patriotism and music. The culture of every nation is in very large measure borrowed from that of other nations, and need be none the less genuine for that. Real concern for one's nation takes the form of an effort to assimilate whatever of value other nations have to offer it. To import nationalism, in the sense described, into art, is to betray one's country and to abandon art altogether. But such a blunder is too puerile to merit serious discussion.

One more confusion, negligible theoretically, but of not inconsiderable practical importance, remains to be described. The appreciation of art requires training, and it is a matter of importance that such training be of a sort to enlighten and not to mislead the learner. At the start, he is always dependent upon the precepts and example of those to whom he looks for guidance. Until he has acquired the developed sensitiveness which comes only with experience of what is good and of what is less good, he is dependent upon accredited teachers, critics, authorities. He must in some degree take their word in making his choice of standards, of examples

of the aesthetically better and worse. Unfortunately, the accredited and authoritative representatives of art usually in some degree suffer from the blight of academicism, and he who goes to them for instruction is in constant danger of taking the technical and the established for what has true aesthetic value. This is a danger probably inherent in human nature, or at least in the nature of society as at present organized. In the case of some of the arts, literature, for example, the danger is lessened by the presence of non-orthodox critics, and by the ready accessibility of books other than those officially approved. In the plastic arts, though there are non-academic critics, the learner finds it extremely difficult, in America at least, to make the acquaintance of works other than those that conform to academic standards. Only the wealthy can as a rule buy pictures, and since he who pays the piper calls the tune, and the acquisition of wealth is rarely the best preparation for the exercise of aesthetic judgment, the pictures for which there is a demand, and which are exhibited as models of aesthetic value, are ordinarily selected in accordance with standards very remotely related to art.

To illustrate these standards, we may quote again from Mr. Roger Fry. His writings on the subject of art had enjoyed considerable vogue and favor so long as he confined himself to commending the Old Masters. He ventured, however, to speak favorably of a number of Post-Impressionist painters, and instantly his readers' attitude changed to one of astonishment and indignation or ridicule. "I see now" he tells us "that my crime had been to strike at the vested emotional interests. These people felt that their special culture was one of their social assets. To be able to speak glibly of Tang and Ming, of Amico di Sandro and Baldovinetti, gave them a social standing and a social cachet. It was felt that one could only appreciate Amico

di Sandro when one had acquired a certain considerable mass of erudition and given a great deal of time and attention, but to admire Matisse required only a certain sensibility. One could feel fairly sure that one's maid could not rival one in the former case, but might by a mere haphazard gift of Providence surpass one in the second. So the accusation of revolutionary anarchy was due to a social rather than an aesthetic prejudice."

All this amounts to saying that aesthetic values are readily confused with "social" values. The same confusion, though inverted in direction, may be illustrated by another instance. There is an American school of art through which is offered a prize to whatever painting, shown at its annual exhibition, is judged to be the best by the majority of those who visit the exhibition. The majority of those who visit the exhibition, as might be expected, habitually vote for a work which tells a story or makes a sentimental appeal. That such a prize should be offered is in a sense comic; but, as a social symptom, it is not comic that anyone should set the seal of his approval—and that is what rewarding with a prize amounts to—upon what most completely conforms to the standards of mediocrity. If the French Academy were to offer each year a reward of merit to the novel of which the greatest number of copies were sold, or if a university were to give a prize to the student who graduated precisely in the middle of his class, there would be an exact parallel to the performance in question. In other words, what we may call the "democratic" fallacy, the persuasion that that is best which most pleases the majority, is as little to be respected as the apparently opposed belief that that is best which most pleases the socially elect. "Social" value, of any sort, has nothing to do with aesthetic value.

The last confusion may seem so elementary and so trivial as not to merit serious discussion. From the point of view

of aesthetic theory, as we have already said, of course it is. But it is not trivial psychologically. In art, as in politics or morals or religion, the individual wins his way to independence of judgment, to individuality, against constant and very vigorous social opposition. That society is always wrong, is not for a moment to be asserted. But it is always less right than it thinks it is. Its conviction of rightness is all the more dangerous in that sluggishness in ourselves conspires with it to make us share its opinion; so conspires, because to assent, to accept the standards of others, offers relief from the arduousness of responsible judgment on our own account. Whoever desires to be more than an echo, or, in Mr. Galsworthy's phrase, a "poor little bundle of other people's ideas," must struggle through conflict to his emancipation. And no account of the relation of art to life is complete that does not point out some of the forces in life that seek to throttle art.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

IN this last chapter we shall sum up our contention as a whole, recall briefly the argument for it, and again make clear the contrast it presents to the view of art which is generally held.

We have tried to make the point that art is life, that there is no duty to be done, no relationship into which we can enter, no human desire or purpose, that if enlightened by intelligence does not enter the realm of art. We have seen the germ of art in the simplest instinct, in its natural and essential tendency to reach, however, gropingly, towards imaginative comprehension of its object. With the lessons taught by experience and reflection upon experience, this comprehension becomes surer and more adequate, and the action which it guides becomes more just, more generous, and more truly expressive of all that the man acting wants and is. In a world never wholly propitious to human welfare and never wholly tractable, enlightenment always falls in part short of its goal, and so we have painting and literature and music and the other particular arts, to show more completely than life can "the end of every man's desire." And fine art itself, though it provides that which the real world can neither give nor take away, is not merely a walled garden, a refuge or a haven. If the artist has embodied in his work the stuff of which life is made, if he has truly understood and expressed the human soul, his work will be a beacon to light, for those who follow him, the way into the promised land which he could

see only from afar. But he will have little to show, and those who follow will lack eyes to see, unless both he and they come to the work of art through the art of life.

It is scarcely to hoped that such a view, if seriously meant, will seem other than far-fetched and fantastic. The association between art and a leisured life, or the bohemian life of, let us say, the Latin quarter, is so strong that it is hard to think of art as not only an enjoyment but also an activity in which all men may share. That they do not share in it, is at present only too true. They do not, partly because of the very view we have been combatting, that art must be sought only or primarily in the studio or picture-gallery, partly because objective conditions starve or stifle them.

If art is to flourish, no means must be omitted to show how it may be cultivated by all men and under all conditions. The sharp distinction between morals and art, for example, makes morality dull, perfunctory, and self-righteous, art undisciplined and parasitic. Such a separation is a part of the view that life goes on in various compartments, that when we enter the compartment marked "art," we go out of the others marked "religion," "science," "practical affairs." Art is all of these, and not therefore the less art; it is more than any of them, just as no one of them is *merely* art; but if we make a division out of a distinction, all that is divided suffers and loses in its own true nature.

For example. We have spoken of instinct or emotion as akin to art in that it is conscious of an object; morality, in that it possesses a sympathetic insight into the lives of other men; religion, in that it seeks to lay hold of what is most real and most valuable. At this point some critic is likely to rise up and say that so far as art is knowledge it is not art; that knowledge is science or philosophy; that religion depends upon theological dogma; that art that seeks to mirror the real is not art but imitation, photography, or natural history.

This is the perfect expression of the compartmental view. The whole of our previous discussion is the theoretical answer to it: it remains to offer an additional instance of the fact that the separate motives of art, religion, philosophy, etc., are at their best when they are woven into a single fabric. We have already given instances of the interweaving of art and religion and morals, and so we may confine ourselves to the objection that to make of art any kind of knowledge is to confuse it with science or philosophy.

A scientific law is an attempt to bring under a single formula a wide range of phenomena, to show a single principle acting under many diverse conditions. Atomism, for example, evolution, and the conception that the sun and not the earth is the centre of the solar system, are all ideas by which we correlate and predict innumerable particular facts. Since they are the work of men who bear the label "scientist" and not "artist," we are likely to suppose that they have merely intellectual character, and are not works of art. But a scientific generalization such as any of these is more than an instrument of prediction, a hypothesis to be verified. Upon these characters depends our intellectual attitude to it, our willingness to assent or deny. It is also a means of seeing and grasping together many isolated data, of finding unity and harmony in what was previously confusion. All these facts it presents to us grouped and composed as a single spectacle, and in doing so it has aesthetic value. The whirl of the planets about the sun, the procession of the stars through space, the march of life from amoeba to man, are more than devices by which we look for new facts: they are wings on which our imagination may soar if it will.

Atomism found its poet in Lucretius. Most scientific theories have been less fortunate. Philosophers have rarely been poets, but philosophical conceptions may be essentially poetical. It is difficult to estimate how much of

Schopenhauer's vogue was due to what success his philosophy had in actually explaining the world and the life that is lived there. But it is certain that a large part of it was due to the imaginative appeal of "the world as will." That all things are the manifestations of an ever-unsatisfied striving, endlessly seeking what endlessly eludes it until it has ceased to strive, until it has willed to will no more: this idea of the irony at the heart of things, is assuredly as much aesthetic as philosophic. Schopenhauer's own style enabled him to make the idea moving if not convincing, but if he had had no style it would still have been an essentially poetic conception. We have an additional aesthetic application of it in the works of Hardy—works which would lose nearly all their characteristic savor if it were taken out of them.

The contention that art at its best requires the coöperation of other motives with the strictly aesthetic, is so well put by Mr. Bernard Shaw that his words deserve quotation. It is possible to assent to what he says without committing ourselves to acceptance of his own practice as well as precept. He is speaking of style, but of course he means by the word aesthetic or imaginative quality in general. "No doubt I must recognize, as even the Ancient Mariner did, that I must tell my story entertainingly if I am to hold the wedding guest spell-bound in spite of the siren strains of the loud bassoon. But 'for art's sake' alone I would not face the toil of writing a single sentence. I know that there are men who, having nothing to say and nothing to write, are nevertheless so in love with oratory and with literature that they keep desperately repeating as much as they can understand of what others have said or written aforetime. But a true original style is never achieved for its own sake. Effectiveness of assertion is the Alpha and Omega of style. He who has nothing to assert has no style and can have none; he

who has something to assert will go as far in power of style as its momentousness and conviction will carry him. Disprove his assertion after it is made, yet its style remains. Darwin has no more destroyed the style of Bach nor of Handel than Martin Luther destroyed the style of Giotto. Your Royal Academician thinks he can get the style of Giotto without Giotto's beliefs, and correct his perspective into the bargain. Your academic copier of fossils offers them to you as the latest outpouring of the human spirit, and, worst of all, kidnaps young people as pupils and persuades them that his limitations are rules, his observances dexterities, his timidities good taste, and his emptiness purities. And when he declares that art should not be didactic, all the people who have nothing to teach and all the people who don't want to learn agree with him emphatically.”*

The road that leads to art, as we have described it, may be described also from another point of view. We speak of art as the expression of personality, and say that art in which no personality is expressed is without life or value. What, then, do we mean by personality? All that we have said, in answering the question What is art? is also relevant to the question What is personality?

Personality is sometimes conceived in a purely negative sense. I am I because I am not somebody else. The more like somebody else I am, or the more my action takes account of his wishes, wants, and purposes, the less am I myself. We have here the compartmental view from a different angle, with its familiar assumption that what is one thing is thereby debarred from being anything else. According to it I can only be sure that I am having my way if I am preventing somebody else from having his. Concord, concession,

* From the preface to “Man and Superman.” Slightly abridged.

harmony, are all damaging to my individuality, since all indicate encroachment of another personality upon my own. To be individual, I must seek as much strife and difference from the rest of the world as possible.

If carried through to the logical conclusion, this view makes of eccentricity the consummation of personality. In contrast, we may say that a man is what he is because of what he includes, not excludes, because he has a share in a world of nature and man which not only makes his existence possible, but offers him a means for satisfying his will, for "finding himself." We judge to be individual a man who has made, so far as possible, the thoughts and purposes of others his own, who can enter into and share their life rather than merely be different from it. Individuality then means number, variety, and depth of connections with others, not isolated and atomic self-sufficiency.

We find the paradox of individuality and universality in the simplest form of desire. It is illustrated in James's instance of the baby who wants what he wants entirely for its own sake, and at the same time entirely for *his* own sake. He does not even know that these are two different things. His desire is at once wholly impersonal and unselfish, and at the same time wholly personal and selfish. We find the same paradox in instinct of all kinds. In intense love or anger, we seem to be both most and least ourselves. In both, inhibitions are relaxed, and liberation of a sort achieved. This is true also of drunkenness; yet when sobriety or self-control or sanity returns, we are likely to think of the impulse that seemed so much a part of us as something coming from somewhere outside of us, and so far as possible we disclaim responsibility for it by saying "I was not myself." Is it true then that when we are most ourselves we are least ourselves?

The answer is that individuality, in the eulogistic sense,

is the work of intelligence, and intelligence, as we have seen, lends a relative impersonality to desire by making its object more objective. Primitive impulse *feels* like individuality. We seem, in letting ourselves go, to be realizing ourselves most fully. Yet in such activities there is least to distinguish us from others, and we are most entirely commonplace. Nothing is less individual than the cry of anger or fear. Each member of a mob doubtless feels that he is giving vent to something springing from the depths of his personality when he joins in a lynching party; but in his acts he is like everyone else in the mob, or at least much more like them than when he is calm. They are all alike because reflection is in abeyance, and the situation, instead of being developed into a full envisagement of what is presented and what is intended, is a mere blur in every mind. If it were clearly thought out, each individual would react to it by virtue of all his powers and so as a true individual. It is his *full* self that is unique, his full self moulded by all he has done and undergone, and not driven by any single impulse, with its partial and one-sided view of things; and the coördination of all his powers, the expression of his total self, is the same thing as the interpretation of an object in terms of all its relationships.

A simple illustration will make the point clear. If anyone, returning from a trip to China, tells us only of his feelings and emotions, he tells us very little. Suppose that he says, "I had great expectations, I was pleased, I was astonished, I was disappointed at one time, disgusted at another, bored occasionally, both glad and sorry to come home." Any one of a million persons might say all this. If we want to know more, if we want to get an idea of his experience and at the same time get an idea of *him*, we must ask: "What did you expect, can you tell me what astonished and pleased you, what disgusted and bored you? What were you sorry to

leave, and what were you glad to come back to?" When we have learned the answer to these questions, we have learned something about China, and also something about the traveller. If our traveller cannot answer them, or can answer them only vaguely, we have a poor idea of his trip, and a poor opinion of him.

An individual, in a word, expresses his personal individuality in the individuality of his world. This is what is meant by the detachment of the artist. He does not luxuriate in his own feelings, but seeks and discovers that view or comprehension of things in which his feelings have their proper embodiment or expression. In so far as the world which his feelings grasp is a human world, it recognizes the quality of his feelings by his success in understanding *it*. Anyone who fails to understand us as individuals is felt to be himself either lacking in individuality or deficient in interest in us. There is a story in one of d'Annunzio's books, in which a man of many amours calls his present mistress by the name of her immediate predecessor. Their relations come to an end forthwith.

It is because, as intelligence and general culture rise to higher levels, objectivity increases too, that we say that the greatest artist is the most impersonal artist. Of course, he is also the most personal. But his personality has passed into his world, and he shows himself in showing it. The greater artist always communicates his feeling by bringing out what is in his subject; the lesser, by adding to it what amounts to a gesture or exclamation of his own. A novelist who audibly sighs over or commends his characters makes us cold to them and cold to him. He is like the story-teller, to use Bosanquet's illustration, who on repeating a jest from Punch and finding that it has fallen flat, adds, "You should have seen the illustration."

We thus come back to the question of art and the other

departments of life. For the objectivity which is the consummation of art is impossible to one whose mind does not feed upon the wider range of things which are a part also of human affairs, morality, science, religion. The burial of art in itself, and the burial of the artist in himself, are one and the same thing, and that is a burial. That way lie diletanteism, academicism, sentimentalism, and virtuosity.

The objectivity of interest and extensive connections in reality which make life robust are not wholly dependent upon either the will or intelligence of the artist himself. They must be made possible and fostered by the social life and organization of which he is a part. It is clearly out of the question to consider at length the problem of the artist and his milieu; but if, transferring our attention from the practitioner of any one of the recognized fine arts, we consider life as an art, we may raise the question how far it is helped and how far hindered by the conditions of life as they exist at the present time.

This is a question which has been much debated, usually with the conclusion that present conditions are extremely destructive to art in every sense of the word. It is needless to repeat the strictures of Ruskin and William Morris upon industrialism. These writers point to the Middle Ages as the paradise of art, and all in one way or another urge us to return to it. But they urge the impossible. Neither abandonment of machine industry nor abandonment of democracy is likely for the present.

Let us, taking these features of the present regime as permanent in any event, consider rather the source of the difficulties in so far as they may be changed without dispensing with either. It is, as we have said, only too true that life and art as we find them are not notably conjoined, that for the mass of men life is more drudgery than art, and that the

enjoyment of art actually *is*, in the main, and for most of us, a relaxation, a consumption of the product of professional artists. Can we expect an industrial democracy ever to make of it anything else?

It is idle to talk of an art of life for slaves. What makes life art is its guidance by intelligence, and the slave is by definition guided by the intelligence or will of another. But certainly, for the majority of men, slavery in this sense is a fact. They enjoy intervals of freedom, of course, but while they are pursuing their occupation they do as they are told, and they are not invited to discuss what they are told to do. It is utopian to suppose that men will ever be freed from harsh necessities and irksome tasks, but it is not utopian to think that a man may hope to have a voice in the determination of things that affect him profoundly, or that in the course of the labor by which he lives he should be permitted to act as a rational being and not as a mere cog in a machine.

This is what the democratic movement as it exists at present for the most part recognizes. The desire of labor for a voice in the control of industry is only in part a desire for higher wages and shorter hours, necessary as these are if labor is to lead a more humane life. It is also for an opportunity to exercise initiative in action, to take a responsible part in the direction of industry and share the experiences which responsibility brings. It is, in a word, a demand for the opportunity to be intelligent, and to be intelligent in all the realms of life. So to be intelligent is to be an artist, and for this road to art there is no substitute.

It is perhaps utopian to consider what art and life might be in a community in which, through the use of the material resources of life for all, all might enjoy the freedom which now is the privilege of a small minority. Since, however, such a revolution in society is frequently opposed in the interest of art, we may round out our discussion, and show

one of its practical bearings, by considering how art could be expected to flourish in a real democracy.

The fear for art which animates those who oppose democracy in its behalf, springs from the now familiar view of art as a separate compartment in life. The artist, we are told, would not be supported by a democracy, since only a small part of human beings really care for music, pictures, or any literature but melodrama. Hence the artist would lack support, or be obliged to keep his pot boiling by activities which would distract him and prevent him from devoting his energies to their proper concern.

The reply to this fear will serve to summarize our contention as a whole. If art springs from the enlightenment by intelligence of varied and free activities, we can scarcely expect a majority condemned to a monotonous and servile life to catch the spirit of the artist, or to be other than superficially interested in what arises out of that spirit. Not to speak of privation or weariness, the majority suffer from the paralysis of spirit that any degree of serfdom always brings with it. The absence of the needful experience, of the opportunity to reflect upon life and make reflection a directing force in it, precludes the possession of such a background as would make art intelligible. Is it then to be marvelled at that for most men art is only day-dreaming?

The purpose of democracy, as Dewey says, is to give to every individual that "distinction" which is now the property of the very few or the very gifted. Of course if we understand by "distinction" the eminence of Plato or Shakespeare, we have little reason to hope that all men will ever be distinguished. But men who are not geniuses may find such degree of personal individuality, such a reflective and distinctive attitude in all the relations of life, as their bent and ability permit. If they do so, and only if they do so, will

art achieve its highest development, for only then will it have all the resources of life to draw upon.

The artist himself has nothing to fear from the change. In the absence of millionaires, he may have to be content with lower prices for his pictures or smaller royalties from his books; but if it is possible for all those who are potentially capable of interest in art to take their place among his public, he need not fear utter extinction. Even if he is obliged to devote a part of his energies to breadwinning by means other than the use of his brush or pen, it is not altogether clear that he will be the loser. If an artist must first be a man, a share in the common lot of humanity need not injure his art.

